



Work-family life balance: future trends and challenges

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**OECD/IFP Project on the
“Future of Families to 2030”**

Work/Family Life Balance: Future Trends and Challenges

prepared by Jeanne Fagnani

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to offer a holistic forward-looking, and multi level analysis of pressing contemporary topics related to work/life balance policies for families with smaller children and to show how they interact with parents' attitudes and practices. To accomplish this we have the benefit of an enormous body of research which allows us to document the issues addressed in this paper.

The paper is structured as follows. In the first section a brief overview of current trends in the work/family life related areas is presented. Then the main key drivers of change are identified and described. In the last section of the paper, drawing lessons from evidence-based research and latest data presented in the previous sections, we flesh out the two scenarios to 2030 developed for this purpose in the project.

I. CURRENT AND SLOW MOVING TRENDS: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

In recent years, a spate of literature, including the OECD Babies and Bosses reviews of policies to promote work and family balance (2007), has already provided us with a lot of insights and analysis. Therefore in this chapter we choose to put emphasis on current and slow moving trends which will contribute to shape the future as far as work/family life related topics are concerned.

It is beforehand necessary to underline that across the OECD countries, the progressive arrival of mothers on the labour market since the 1970s has, through an interactive process, prompted policy makers and to a lesser extent companies to introduce a whole range of services for parents in paid employment, which has in turn enabled a growing number of mothers to gain access to jobs or to pursue a career.

We also have to keep in mind that work/life reconciliation policies are encapsulated by a wider set of social, housing and employment policies and it is sometimes difficult to disentangle the outcomes of the various sets of measures implemented.

1. Work/family life balance policies

Reforms to enhance work/life balance have gained momentum in many OECD countries since the 1990s. Concomitantly pushing the development of public or market-provided child care provisions has become a key trend and the availability of pre-school childcare has improved significantly.

At the state level

Public childcare provisions

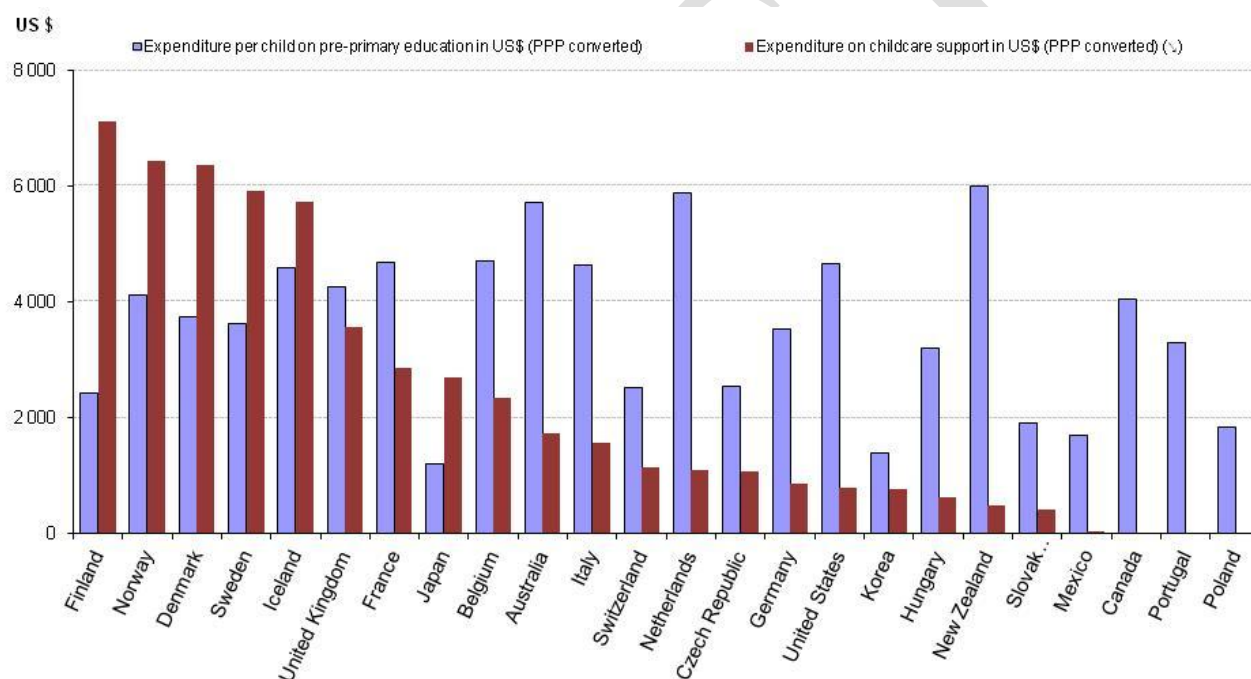
Over the last decades, against the background of an overall increase in female employment rates, governments have sought to expand childcare facilities but from decidedly different starting points that explain differences in reaction to similar challenges. Despite some evidence of convergence between countries, differences remain striking in respect to level of supply; structures of funding;

modes of governance; opening hours; patterns of provision; and the division of responsibility for care between the State, local public authorities, employers, the market and the family.

Family spending has the greatest focus on childcare services in the Nordic countries and France (Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2) and they lead the European Union (EU) in public childcare provisions and benefits aimed at reducing child care costs for families.

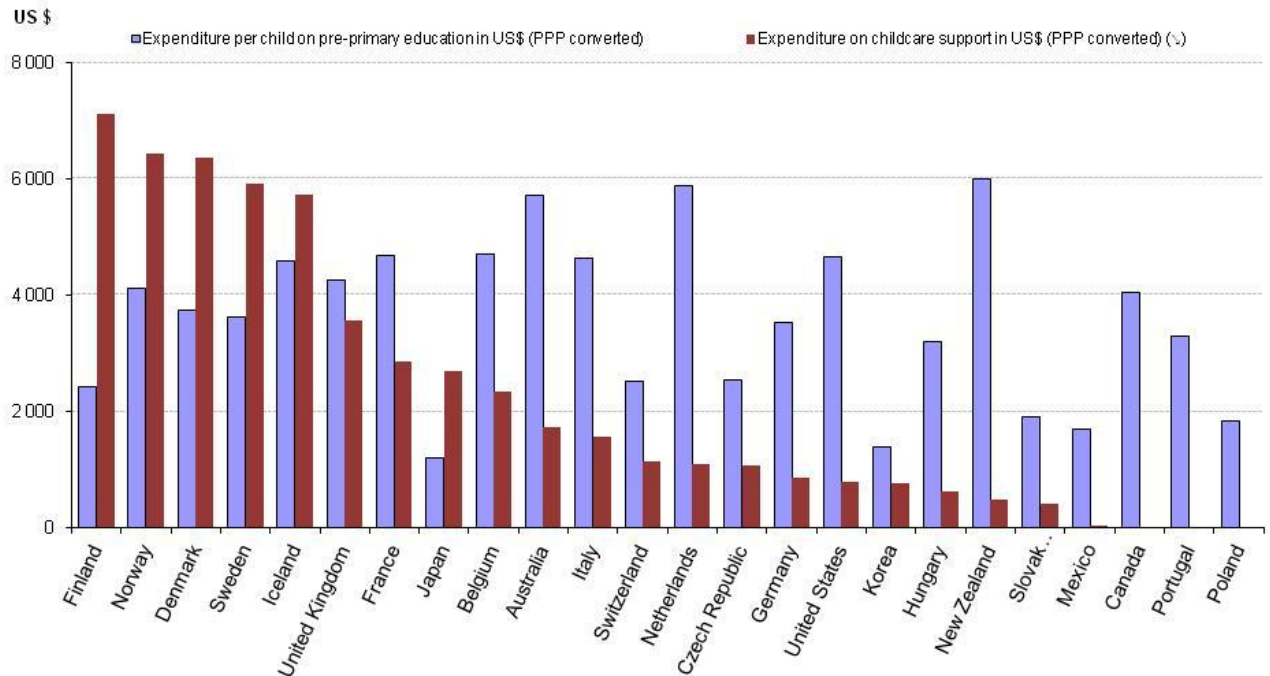
There is still a huge variety in spending on formal childcare per child under three years of age (Chart 1). It is highest in Nordic countries. Lower public spending on childcare in southern European countries is typical as informal care is predominantly used for the younger children and mainstream participation in pre-school begins at age three and onwards. Public spending on childcare per child is also lower in countries where private provision of day care is predominant, as for example, in the US. In countries like Korea and Japan family expenditure plays a significant role in care and education services throughout the early years.

Figure 1 - Expenditure on childcare and early education services (2005)



Source: Social Expenditure database 1980-2005; OECD Education database; Eurostat for Non-OECD countries; US Department of Health and Human Services

Figure 2 - Public expenditure on childcare and pre-school, per child, 2005



Source: Social Expenditure database 1980-2005; OECD Education database; Eurostat for Non-OECD countries; US Department of Health and Human Services

It is remarkable however that public expenditure on childcare services has dramatically increased since 1998 in all OECD countries¹ (except in Portugal, see OECD Social Expenditure database 1980-2005), but particularly so in countries where childcare provisions were still limited: Korea, New Zealand, Germany, Ireland, Spain, Switzerland, UK and the US.

The UK, for instance, had long languished at the bottom of European league tables in this field. Under Blair's Labour government significant improvements were made to the work/family balance, particularly in child care provision. Government expenditure was increased (qualified by Smith, 2007, as "a quiet revolution"), and all three and four-year-olds now have access to some form of free childcare provision.

The most important changes carried out by the Labour Government since 1997 have been concerned with funding. In 1998 *Childcare Tax Credit* was introduced. This provides government funding for tax credits to enable parents to choose and pay for childcare. This led to the rapid growth of the for-profit childcare sector. In 2006, the Government passed the *Childcare Act*, which removed powers from local authorities to fund or provide childcare directly, and legislated for "*childcare market management*". The job of local authorities is now mainly to manage and co-ordinate supply and demand for childcare by providing information for parents about the local childcare market and other services for children, and to stimulate the creation of local for-profit providers to meet demand. Many local authorities now have "*childcare business managers*". All childcare is expected to be self-funding

¹ Source : OECD Social Expenditure Database (SOCX, www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure)

or “sustainable” (Centre for Longitudinal Studies, 2010). 85% of childcare is now provided by the private for-profit market².

In Germany, significant steps in the right direction have also been made over the last decade (Table 11 in Annex) but the picture remains far from complete (Fagnani, Math, 2010): this country still lags behind the Nordic countries. Cultural and institutional obstacles have dampened the pace of childcare reforms and have led to a patchwork policy in which all childcare is provided at the municipal level, by local non-profit providers or NGOs and churches. A mere 1% of the market is covered by for-profit providers. The highly decentralized Federal structure and its multiplicity of stakeholders have resulted in a tangled web that has increased the complexity of the system in terms of finances and organisation. This offers a partial explanation for the modest development of childcare policies in Germany.

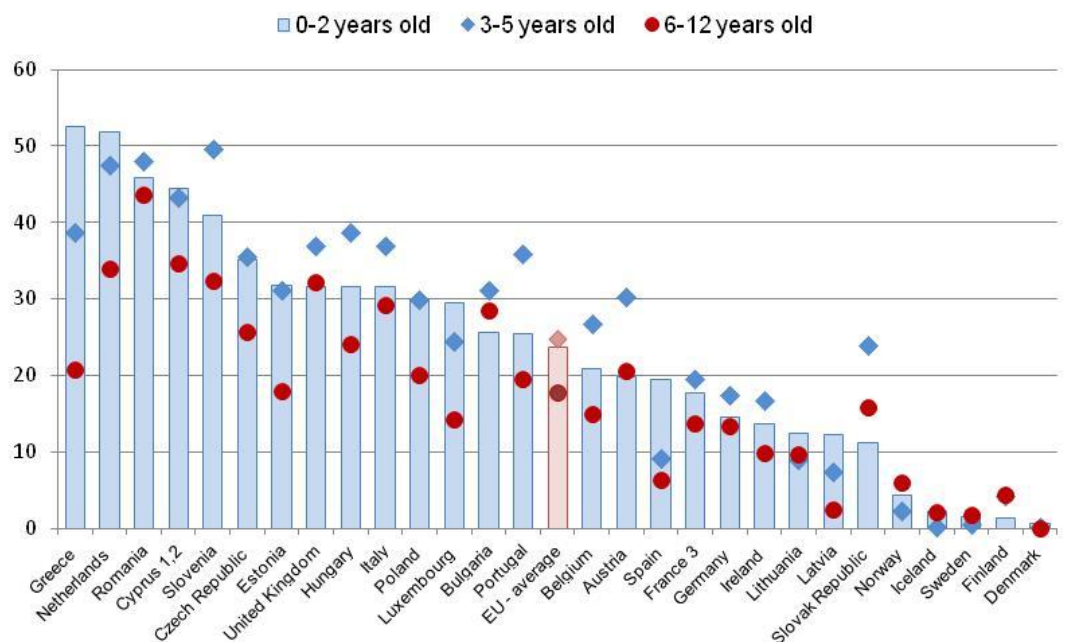
The Nordic countries top the league table in this regard: in Sweden, for instance, a place in day-care centre is guaranteed within a three-month period after request for a child aged between 1 and 5 years.

This situation contrasts with that of the US, where government support for child care policies remains weak (Lower-Basch, 2008, White, 2009, Williams, Boushey, 2010). About 30 percent of low-income families using centre-based care, and 16 percent using an in-home care centre for a child under age 6, receive subsidies. The percentage of middle-income families receiving subsidies is negligible—about 3 percent for an in-home care centre. There are federal tax policies, however, that tend to benefit middle-income and professional-managerial families. The *Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit* benefits higher income workers and families because it is only available to families where parents—both parents if it is a married couple—have earnings or are in school. Low-income families often don’t earn enough to benefit significantly from or even receive the tax credit. *Flexible Spending Accounts for Dependent Care* most often go to professional-managerial families because employers must set up these programs. A real weakness of both policies is that neither controls for quality of care. Further, neither is large enough to provide significant help for most families (Williams, Boushey, 2010). Hence “Americans at all levels struggle to find high-quality childcare—and struggle even more to pay for it.....in March 2009 dollars, low-income families paid about 14 percent of their income. Families in the middle average 6 percent to 9 percent of their income. Professional families pay about 3 percent to 7 percent of their income. Subsidies are available only for low-income families and are scarce and sporadic even for them.” (Williams, Boushey, 2010).

However, except in the Nordic countries, in every OECD country there is a shortfall of places in public childcare provisions and most of the time working parents have no choice but to rely on informal childcare arrangements (Figure 3, page 9) or to take up a parental leave if they are eligible to or work on a part-time basis with work schedules that fit their family needs.

² Source: www.dcsf.gov.uk

Figure 3 - Use of informal childcare arrangements during a typical week by children's age, 2008



Notes:

1) Footnote by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to « Cyprus » relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognizes the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue";

2) Footnote by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Commission: The Republic of Cyprus is recognized by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

3) Data for France concern 2007.

Source: OECD Family database, 2009

Family-related leave schemes: Parental leave, maternity and paternity leaves, leave for urgent family reasons

Across the OECD countries, there is a large variety of types of leave open to parents, short and long, paid and unpaid (Gornick, Hegewisch, 2010, Kamerman, Moss, 2009, Moss, 2010). For paid leave, compensation may be calculated as all or part of the individual's normal pay or be paid at a flat rate. Compensation may be limited to a period shorter than the actual duration of leave. It may be capped, means-tested or subject to other criteria (such as the number of children or previous employment/service). The various forms of family-related leave are a central issue in the widespread attempts across Europe and Québec (Canada), to enhance work/life balance. Such leave has received increasing attention over recent years from both legislators (often prompted by EU Directives) and the social partners. As OECD family-database and many studies (Moss, Korintus, 2009) already have provided a lot of information in this field, we shall pay attention to some innovative systems that may develop in the future:

1. From this perspective, Belgium is of particular interest because of its unique and highly innovative 'time credit' system, which extends entitlement to take time off work to cover the whole adult life-course and for any reason. First introduced as a 'career break' scheme in 1985, which enables workers in the private sector to take at least one year off work (longer

where collective agreements permit this) or to work reduced hours for any reason (a similar system operates in the public sector). Workers using time credit receive partial income replacement through a flat-rate benefit for one year (extended to five years if the worker takes a full-time time credit to care for children aged under eight years), reduced proportionately if they reduce their working hours. Originally introduced as a means to reduce unemployment, that link no longer exists; paid leave is not now conditional on employers hiring an unemployed person as replacement. The time credit and career break schemes exist alongside parental leave, and the two are not to be confused (Moss, Korintus, 2009).

2. In Germany, the government introduced in 2007 a new parental leave allowance (*Elterngeld*) which represented a radical departure from previous tradition. Using the Swedish model for inspiration, the new gender neutral scheme allows parents to claim 67% of their previous average net income in the 12 months preceding the birth of the child³. The *Elterngeld* is granted for a minimum of one year and is non-taxable. In order to avoid what political representatives from the SPD and the Green party described as ‘a redistribution from the poor to the rich’, the government introduced a minimum benefit level of €300, regardless of prior employment status, and a maximum benefit ceiling of €1800 per month.

As a corollary to this new policy, fathers are being encouraged to play a greater role in family life than has traditionally been the case in Germany. When the *Elterngeld* is shared between partners they can extend the period for which it is received from 12 to 14 months. To avoid penalising low paid parents whose relevant income is less than €1000 a month the allowance can be adjusted upwards from 67 % in the form of a low income supplement.

To overcome the challenge of re-entering the workforce after extended periods of absence recipients of the allowance are encouraged to maintain their links to the labour market and in most cases—employees of small to medium sized enterprises must first be granted permission from their employer—are allowed to work part-time up to 30 hours per week. The income earned from this work is taken into account when calculating the amount of the parental allowance. Flexibility is the key here and in this respect the *Elterngeld* can facilitate a wide range of arrangements between parents. They could for example share the time during which they receive the benefit either simultaneously (in which case each would receive 7 months parental leave) or successively with one parent following the other. Instead of 12 months, the period of payment may be spread over 24 months (plus 4 months if the other parent takes it up) but the monthly benefit level is reduced so that the overall payment remains the same.

One of the goals of these measures is to eliminate the financial challenges many women must face when choosing between their career and motherhood. Indeed, the assumption is that many career-oriented women avoid motherhood altogether as it would involve such a large loss of income (Spiess and Wrohlich, 2008) thus every effort is made to make the transition back to professional life as smooth as possible.

3. In France, in 2002, the government intended to encourage ‘real parental parity’ and to place more emphasis on the right of both parents to be present with a newborn baby. It resulted in

³ Within the austerity package announced in June 2010 by the government headed by Chancellor Angela Merkel, recipients of the *Elterngeld* with a net monthly income of over 1,240 euros will be provided with 65 percent of their income prior to the birth, rather than the current rate of 67 percent.

the decision to extend paternity leave from three to eleven working days. Payment is made at full salary up to a certain ceiling and is funded from health insurance as for maternity leave (100 per cent of gross earnings, up to a ceiling of €2,885 a month in 2010) (Fagnani, 2010).

Life-course savings scheme: improving the work–life balance over the life course?

The European Commission ('European Employment Strategy') and many social partners currently promote a life course perspective whose aim is to increase both the quantity and the quality of labour supply throughout the life course. The Life-course savings scheme, introduced in the Netherlands in 2006, also aims to improve the work–life balance over the life course. Take-up rate however is low: a recent study shows that purchasing power is a core explanatory factor and that early retirement prevails as a reason for participation (Delsen, Smits, 2010). The German long-term working time accounts and the Belgium Time Credit Scheme also exhibit similar and disappointing results.

Side-effects and unintended consequences of “woman-friendly” policies

Policies providing state parental leave laws certainly foster both choice and higher levels of mothers' employment. However as long as men's take-up of these work-family provisions remains low (which is the case even in the Nordic countries) the picture will remain mixed and ambivalent. From the perspective of gender equality on the labour market, family-related leave schemes can be viewed as something of 'a poisoned chalice' when put into actual practice.

Much of the empirical research conducted in this field has therefore assessed these schemes from a critical stance: Gornick and Hegewisch (2010) have recently discussed the growing literature on adverse and unintended consequences of work-family policies for gender equality. They point out that widespread research has shown that returning to employment is more difficult after extended absences and has a strong impact on career prospects. Encouraging mothers to stop working for a long period of time (more than one year) might entail numerous side-effects. Bearing in mind that recipients are almost exclusively women, research conducted in this field demonstrates that parental leave schemes:

- maintain or reinforce the traditional gender division within the family: the mother who stops working (or reduces her working hours) feels less justified in asking for her husband's help.
- contribute to the maintenance of gender discrimination in the labour market by establishing asymmetrical professional trajectories within couples, and wage differentials between men and women. When mothers resume their job after an interruption of one or more year, they are likely to suffer occupational downgrading.
- Reinforce employers' prejudices towards female workers: i.e. that they would be less committed to their work and less willing to pursue a career. Many employers may be (and are) reluctant to hire young women because they anticipate future absences from work. In the same line of vision, Henrekson and Stenkula (2009) analysed gender differences between the Nordic and Anglo-Saxon countries, in particular the share of women in executive positions in the corporate sector: in the Nordic countries, women represented 27% to 32% of executives against 34% to 43% in Australia, Britain, Canada and the US where parental leave schemes are much more limited. They suggest that while broad welfare state policy promotes high female labour force participation (in the Nordic countries as well as in France), it blunts incentives to pursue top executive positions in the business sector. They conclude that “a rational response by employers is to exercise statistical discrimination. For instance, they state that Swedish employers reasonably know that women take some 85 percent of total parental leave, that there is a significant opportunity that they will work

less after childbirth, and that they are also far more likely than a man to exercise a parent's unconditional legal right to work part-time until the youngest child turns eight. As a result, the individual woman aiming for an executive career is less likely to be offered a first job that puts her on a career track with great inherent potential. In the US these effects are not present, or much weaker.” (p. 26).

Their interpretations are in sync with those of a research carried out by Mandel and Semyonov (2006). In a study involving 22 countries, they also argue that forms of paid leave can have negative outcomes on women's employment and that countries “characterized by progressive and developed welfare policies ... tend to have high levels of female labour force participation, along with a high concentration of women in female-typed occupations and low female representation in managerial occupations” (p. 1910). They also show that these schemes also reduce women's odds of attaining managerial positions.

Work/family life balance policies at the firm/employer level

An increasing share of employers and firms are now aware that it is important to develop family-friendly initiatives at the workplace (on-site childcare, parental leaves and sabbaticals, flexitime, switching from full-time to part-time, possibility to refuse overtime, job-sharing, tele-working, etc...) (BMFSJ, 2010b).

However measures implemented and level of commitment in work/life balance policies vary according to the size of the companies and widely differ across countries. Publicly-owned companies and the public sector in general are also more likely to promote family-friendly regulations.

For instance, as far as flexible work arrangements are concerned, the US is lagging behind other OECD countries: in a review of statutory employment rights in 21 high-income countries, Gornick and Hegewish (2008) show that high-quality flexible work arrangements are still the exception in the US. Therefore the choice for women tends to be either to work full-time all the time, or work reduced hours, with low pay, no benefits, and little opportunity for advancement.

- *Key drivers are:*

- *Business objectives in regard to employee performance, workplace effectiveness and productivity*

It has been largely documented that making it difficult for employees to combine their job and family responsibilities can undermine workplace effectiveness and productivity (Bailyn, 2006, Rapoport and al., 2002). A supportive and inclusive environment for those employees (often professionals) who benefit from a reduced workload or other alternative working arrangements results in a lower turnover, less absenteeism and more commitment of employees (Kossek and al, 2010, Lirio and al., 2008). ‘Family-friendly’ flexibility can be a cost-effective tool for attracting and retaining employees and the impact of flexible workplace practices on turnover has been demonstrated: case studies documented by the EOPCEA (2010) revealed positive evidence, namely since implementing a tailor-made flexible work schedule programme, there was an increase from 75 percent to almost 90 percent in retention rates, decreased turnover rates and positive employee testimonials. In a study of over 700 firms in the US, UK, France and Germany (referenced by EOPCEA, 2010) researchers found a significant positive relationship between work-life balance practices and productivity.

- *The shortage of skilled labour*

Increasing the recruitment, retention and advancement of women, especially in science, engineering and technology, has now become recognised as a crucial business issue which requires a multi-dimensional approach.

- *The need to recruit or retain skilled workers with children (male or female)*

If women fail to achieve the career progression experienced by their male colleagues, they might be encouraged to either leave their job or to scale back. For instance, in Germany, a chronic shortfall of qualified staff in enterprises and the potential for filling this gap by increasing female participation in the labour market encouraged employer organisations to give their full backing to the ministry Ursula von der Leyen when she introduced radical reforms to family policy from 2007 onwards (Fagnani, Math, 2010).

A comparative study on companies located in six European countries (Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Sweden and Great Britain), shows that except in Germany, complying with statutory or collective agreement requirements is the main reason why companies introduce family-friendly measures. In Germany, the key incentive is increasing job satisfaction, followed by the prospect of becoming a more attractive employer, both for existing and potential qualified employees, and the hope of achieving higher productivity (BMFSJ, 2010b). Moreover, flexible arrangements are supposed to pay off with staff retention and to increase the numbers of women at senior levels and the average tenure of production staff.

2. How do working parents cope with their family obligations? Dilemmas, tensions and strategies

The experience of being a working mother or father and managing work and family life are contingent upon diverse resources they can rely on. In other words, people living with dependants try to elaborate strategies to be able to combine a job with family obligations but their room of manoeuvre is depending on a complex bundle of external factors. Numerous studies have shown that policies aimed at supporting women's employment are successful in alleviating the conflicts between home demands and market activity (Gornick and Meyers, 2003; Mandel and Semyonov, 2005; Neyer, 2003; Stier et al., 2001).

However the choices mothers continue to make in regard to their professional life are also profoundly shaped by longstanding attitudes towards what constitutes 'correct' behaviour for women. As Himmelweit points out 'Social norms and values influence the allocation of care and caring responsibilities' (2007, page 581).

Individual and contextual factors that make it difficult to combine a job and family life are numerous. Among the most important are:

- Workplace cultures that define "ideal" workers in ways that conflict with ideal mother norms
- Wider societal norms while supporting maternal employment also reflect assumptions about mothers as the main carers
- High childcare costs and low level of availability of formal and good quality childcare arrangements
- Family-unfriendly patterns of work schedules
- Large number of working hours and low degree of command over the scheduling of one's work hours.
- Long time spent on commuting

The US is an emblematic case as far as these factors are concerned: Work-family conflict seems more acute than elsewhere in the developed world especially as far as low paid women are concerned (Gornick, Hegewisch, 2010, Williams, Boushey, 2010). One reason is that Americans work longer hours than workers in most other developed countries, including Japan, where there is a word, *karoshi*, for “death by overwork.”

Different dilemmas, various constraints

The dual-earner model family where both parents work full-time is still not widespread except in the Nordic countries, in the US and France. But the balance between the hours men and women spend in paid work is becoming less unequal everywhere.

Among women with young children (0-14 years old) at home, it is now not uncommon to work long hours: in former socialist countries (Bulgaria, Latvia, Poland, Romania), in France, Greece, and Turkey, more than 10 percent work 45 hours or more per week (Table 1, page 14). 66% of women in Portugal work 40 hours or more while in the Netherlands almost 8 out of ten work less than 30 hours per week.

**Table 1 - Distribution of working hours among adults in couple families
(with children 0-14 years old) by gender (2007)**

	Women with children 0-14 years old				Men with children 0-14 years old			
	1-29	30-39	40-44	45+	1-29	30-39	40-44	45+
Austria	53.8	22.0	18.1	6.2	2.6	18.2	39.4	39.8
Belgium	35.2	45.3	10.4	9.1	4.0	44.3	24.9	26.9
Bulgaria	1.3	1.9	80.5	16.3	0.7	0.9	74.1	24.3
Cyprus ^{1,2}	9.5	56.6	26.6	7.3	1.0	39.8	32.7	26.5
Czech Republic	8.0	17.9	67.2	7.0	0.3	11.8	54.2	33.7
Estonia	9.7	8.3	78.7	3.3	2.0	1.5	78.5	18.0
Finland	9.4	68.1	16.7	5.8	2.9	35.1	42.3	19.7
France	24.3	53.5	11.5	10.7	3.8	49.4	17.1	29.6
Germany	60.9	21.5	14.8	2.9	3.9	25.6	48.3	22.2
Greece	15.7	22.1	43.5	18.7	3.6	10.8	43.8	41.9
Hungary	7.4	5.7	82.4	4.6	1.6	2.7	78.4	17.3
Italy	38.2	29.0	25.2	7.6	3.6	18.2	47.0	31.3
Latvia	6.9	4.9	75.9	12.3	1.8	1.8	71.4	25.1
Lithuania	11.9	11.8	71.5	4.8	3.4	5.4	80.2	11.1
Luxembourg	43.5	16.8	38.0	1.8	1.6	3.8	89.2	5.4
Malta	33.3	28.1	35.4	3.2	1.5	5.4	70.6	22.5
Netherlands	77.5	17.5	3.9	1.1	4.7	36.7	45.1	13.5
Poland	14.9	7.7	62.0	15.4	3.0	2.3	58.1	36.6
Portugal	7.6	26.1	57.5	8.9	1.6	11.3	63.0	24.1
Romania	7.5	8.5	70.9	13.2	3.1	6.0	67.5	23.4
Slovak Republic	3.1	21.2	70.0	5.7	0.6	13.3	60.3	25.9
Slovenia	3.9	2.0	84.5	9.6	1.3	0.6	77.4	20.8
Spain	25.6	30.8	34.2	9.4	1.4	13.1	50.7	34.8
Turkey	19.8	10.9	31.3	38.0	2.3	2.9	18.6	76.2
U.K	55.3	27.0	9.5	8.4	4.3	22.2	29.6	44.0
OECD-17 Average	29.4	26.1	35.1	9.5	2.7	18.9	47.6	30.8
EU-24 Average	23.5	23.1	45.4	8.0	2.4	15.8	56.0	25.8

Source: OECD

As far as the possibilities to cope with the conflicting demands of paid and unpaid work are concerned, it has been largely documented that room for manoeuvre is not only gender-related but also class-bound. A large share of working parents have to cope with work-family conflict but the terms and conditions under which they experience it vary across the income spectrum: time and spatial constraints, opportunities to outsource care, patterns of work schedules, among others parameters, differ greatly.

- *Upper middle-class dual-earner parents: putting in long hours and being under pressure*

In the US, for instance, by 2008, 14 percent of professional- managerial women and 32 percent of their counterparts who are single mothers work long hours. Among professional-managerial men, 38 percent now work 50 or more hours a week (Williams, Boushey, 2010). Interestingly, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics foresees the professional and business services sectors adding over 4 million jobs to the economy by 2018.

In Germany, where 22.2% of men with children aged under 15 years work more than 45 hours per week (Table 1), six out of ten working fathers having children under 18 would like to devote less time to their job according to a survey carried out in 2010 (Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach, 2010).

- *Working parents confronted with non-standard (or unsocial) work schedules*

Dealing with fragmented and unpredictable working hours or with non-standard work schedules makes it very difficult to articulate a job – even on a part-time basis – with family responsibilities. Parents who have working hours which don't overlap can manage to look after the children and save childcare costs but this arrangement may be detrimental to family life and reduce conjugal time. Atypical work schedules and off-scheduling within dual-earner couples are highly correlated with employment sector, occupation, and position on the social ladder. Off-scheduling though tends to increase the amount of time fathers spend with their children, all the more so when the time at which men finish work coincides with school closing times (Lesnard, 2008). But off-scheduling is more commonly found among couples in which both partners lack control over their work schedules and that are located low down on the social ladder;

- *Working parents on the brink of poverty*

In the US forty percent of low-wage workers work nonstandard hours—defined as anything other than 9:00 to 5:00, five days per week. Single mothers earning less than \$20,000 are twice as likely as other workers to have nonstandard hours, and have the highest rate of nonstandard hours of all U.S. workers. These scheduling practices create high rates of turnover. Taking into account these working conditions it comes as no surprise that in families below the poverty level, 7.5 percent of children aged 5 to 8 and nearly 14 percent of children aged 9 to 11 are latchkey kids (Williams, Boushey, 2010).

The different ways to combine paid work and unpaid work

A large amount of research-based literature has already been published in this area. Taking into consideration what has been said before, women with family responsibilities can rely on different - sometimes very limited - resources (financial, social networking, state legislation...) to elaborate strategies in order to be able to cope with everyday-life or to pursue a career.

- *Anticipating and making the choice to work in a family-friendly environment*

In all OECD countries, women work more often in the public sector than men. In the Nordic countries, more than half of the women work in the public sector (but, contrary to France, a public servant can be made redundant) (Figure 12, in the Annex).

In France, there is a large and family-friendly public sector where the job is for life and where parents are provided with various perks and initiatives which include, but are not limited to, flexible schedules and generous sick leave for children. 38 per cent of employed women in France are working in the public sector (they represent 55 per cent of the staff) but not always with an open-ended contract.

In Israel, where women adopt similar attitudes and practices as their counterparts in Western countries, about half of all working women are employed by the state, in occupations where work regulations are strictly followed. And it comes as no surprise that women employed in the public sector are more likely than others to work when they have young children and less likely to interrupt their employment (Ekert-Jaffé, Stier, 2009).

- *Scaling back after a birth or taking up a parental leave*

After a birth and until the child can attend school, one parent (usually the mother) may just scale back her employment/career for a certain period of time: parental leaves represent in this matter strong

incentives when they provide mothers (or fathers) with financial compensation (Kamerman, Moss, 2009).

Professional and managerial women can slide down the career ladder to find jobs that allow them to spend time with their family. A comprehensive UK study (Gregory, Connolly, 2008) on the impact of motherhood on careers⁴ shows that a third of female corporate managers moved down the career ladder after having a child. Two-thirds of that number took clerical positions and the rest moved into other lower skill jobs. Women managers of shops, salons and restaurants were more seriously affected by occupational downgrading. Almost half gave up their managerial responsibilities to become sales assistants, hairdressers or similar roles when they sought part-time jobs after motherhood.

In Sweden, among those with university degrees, a growing number of couples split the leave evenly; some switch back and forth every few months to avoid one parent assuming a dominant role — or being away from jobs too long. Parents may use their 390 days of paid leave however they want up to the child's eighth birthday — monthly, weekly, daily and even hourly. Eight in 10 fathers now take a third of the total 13 months of leave — and 9 percent of fathers take 40 percent of the total or more — up from 4 percent a decade ago. In Norway, where work-family policies promote family-responsible environments in organizations, fathers have the right to take 5 to 43 weeks of paternal leave (33 weeks are fully paid) and most of them take advantage of this leave (Moss, Korintus, 2009).

Portugal is the only country where paternity leave is mandatory — but only for a week. Iceland has gone furthest, reserving three months for father, three months for mother and allowing parents to share another three months.

- *Part-time work*

A part-time job associated with work hours that fit in with family responsibilities is often considered as a “good solution”.

Over the last decades the rise in the overall rate of mothers' employment in the Netherlands and Germany has been accompanied by a substantial increase in part-time employment, making it easier for women to combine childcare and continued participation in the labour market. The Netherlands stands out however in this regards: for instance 81 per cent of women with two or more children aged 0-14 years (Table 8 in Annex and Table 1, page 14) work less than 30 hours per week compared to 68 per cent in Germany and 9.6 per cent in Finland.

It should be kept in mind that the Netherlands is classified, according to Welfare states typologies, as belonging to the cluster of countries qualified as “one-and-a half breadwinner model” together with Germany and the UK. More specifically, the Netherlands is rather atypical in regards to the patterns of female participation in the labour market: according to Eurostat, in 2006, this country exhibited the highest share in the EU of female employees working part-time (74%) of which 57 percent work less than 20 hours.

The Netherlands can therefore be regarded as a less than salient example of the time induced pressures faced in other countries where patterns of female participation in the workforce are different. In France, for instance, the norm for employed mothers is still to work full-time although part-time jobs have been increasing over the last three decades due to legislation favourable to their development.

⁴ The research used two national databases: the New Earnings Survey, an annual survey of employment details of a random sample of employees including 70,000 women and the British Household Panel survey providing details of women's employment from 1991 to 2001.

In the UK, before having children, more than four-fifths of working women are in full-time employment, but once they become mothers only a third of those who have pre-school children and work were employed full time. For fathers, the pattern went the other way, with 91% of working men employed full time prior to having children, while 96% of working fathers with a pre-school child are full time.

- *Working from home and tele-work*

It has been argued that the use of telecommuting is valued in individualistic countries where people value autonomy but may not be valued in “collectivistic countries” where people tend to give priority to strong social ties. Also, “in order for telecommuting to work, companies need to provide employees with the appropriate technology and there needs to be a quiet work space at home. In some countries, employees live in large households with limited space and it may be too distracting to work at home.” (Chinchilla and al., 2010).

So far working, even part-time, from home seems to be rather limited (except for professionals). In the US, according to the NSE⁵, only 23 percent of employers in 2007 reported allowing some workers to work at home on a regular basis. This decreased to 11 percent according to employees who participated in the *Current Population Survey* (CPS). The EOPCEA (2010) also concludes that flexibility in place of work is not commonly practised in US organisations.

- *Birth rate as a variable of adjustment*

Clearly, at the macro level, birth rate acts as a variable of adjustment. For instance, a shortfall of formal childcare places and lack of state or market-provided support, will likely push women to reduce the number of children they have in order to be able to stay in employment. Or they will postpone the birth until they have a strong foothold in the labour market. This is especially so if childrearing norms imply that mothers with young children should stay at home to look after their child (see the case of Germany). McDonald (2000) makes a similar point in arguing that gender inequalities are responsible for countries' low level of fertility. This confirms that female labour force participation should be examined as an intermediate mechanism in the process linking policies and fertility (Gauthier, 2007, Sleebos, 2003, Castles, 2003).

In Germany, since the turn of the millennium, despite important changes in family policy aimed at helping mothers to better combine a job with family responsibilities, TFR has been stalling at a low level (1.3 in 2010). In reality, working mothers still have to deal with a lot of difficulties in this area partly as a result of the shortage of places in childcare provision for under threes and the persisting influence of the childrearing-related norms (Fagnani, Math, 2011).

3. Work/family conflict and its impact on mothers' employment rates and patterns and on fertility

Motherhood still has an impact on employment patterns but has a far more significant impact in some countries than in others. For instance the difference between the employment rate of women (aged 25-

⁵ *National Study of Employers* (NSE) which provides the perspectives and work-life balance policies of employers in private organisations, and the CPS (which provides employee perspectives), studies carried out by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation's. These two nationally representative surveys analyse the prevalence of workplace flexibility, namely, flexibility in: (i) scheduling of hours, (ii) place of work, (iii) number of hours worked, and (iv) other forms. Special circumstances such as (v) small businesses and manufacturing are also highlighted.

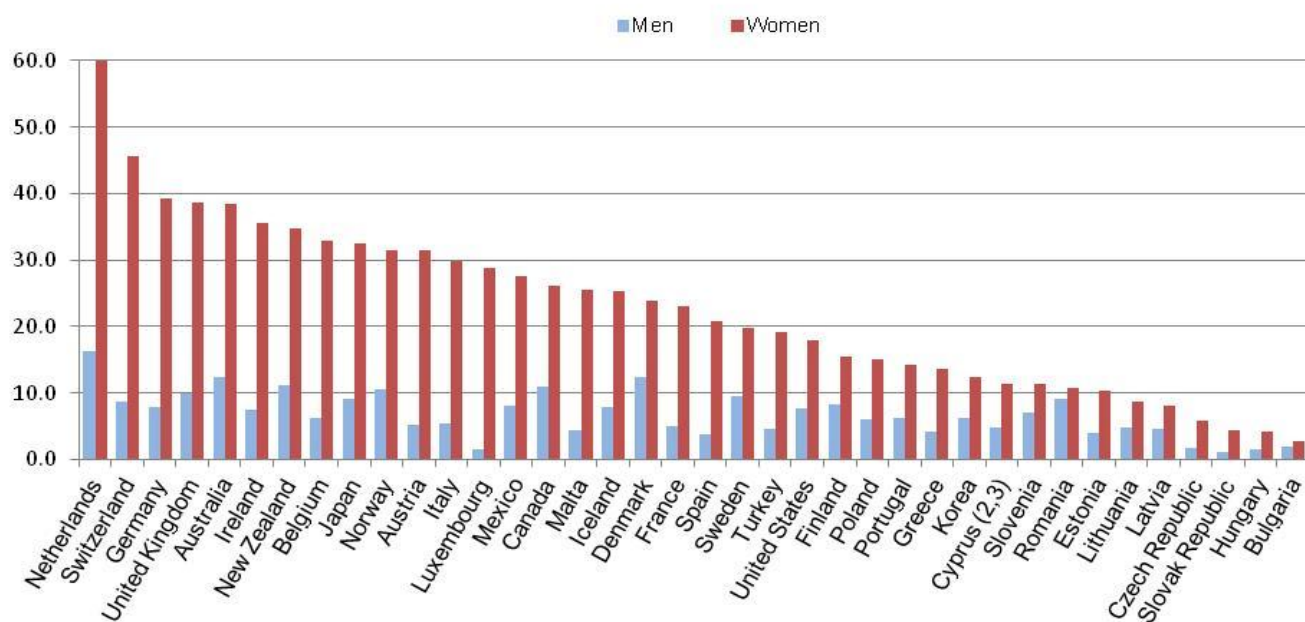
49 years old) without children and the employment rate of women with a child aged under 12 is – 18.1 points in the UK and – 10.4 points in Finland (Eurostat, 2010).

OECD database shows that compared to employment rates of women aged between 25 and 49, maternal employment rates (women with a child under 16) are lower in all countries except Iceland and Sweden. The employment gap is highest in Ireland and Japan (Chart LMF1.2.A).

When we consider the gender gap in employment rates *in full-time equivalent* (to neutralise the effect of the high incidence of part-time employment among women) we observe that the Netherlands once more stands out: this gap reaches 40 points compared to less than 20 points in the Nordic countries, France, Portugal, Canada, US, and Poland.

However across countries employment rates increase with educational attainment, particularly for women. Thus, gender employment gaps are smaller, the higher the education level. Within the EU, countries that exhibit both the highest TFR and completed fertility rates and the lowest gender gap in full-time equivalent employment rates are those providing the most generous public support to working parents (Nordic countries and France), in particular in terms of formal childcare provisions. Conversely, those countries - Korea and Japan – that exhibit very low fertility rates (Figure 6, page 20) and at the same time wide gender gap in employment rates spend much less on childcare and pre-primary education than the former ones (see Figure 2, page 7). Correlatively, enrolment rate of children aged under three in formal childcare is comparatively low (*Society at a Glance*, 2009).

Figure 4 - Incidence of part-time employment, 2007/08



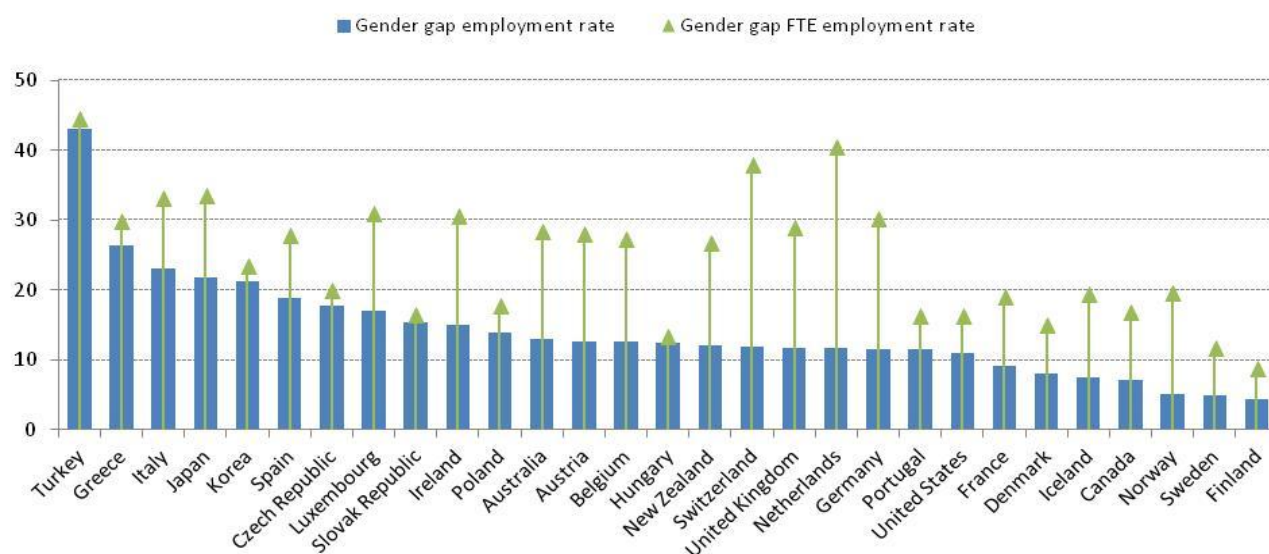
1) 2007 for OECD countries (except 2004 for Mexico), and 2008 for European non OECD countries.

2) Footnote by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to « Cyprus » relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognizes the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue".

3) Footnote by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Commission: The Republic of Cyprus is recognized by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

Source: OECD Database on Labour Force Statistics and ELFS for EU-countries outside the OECD

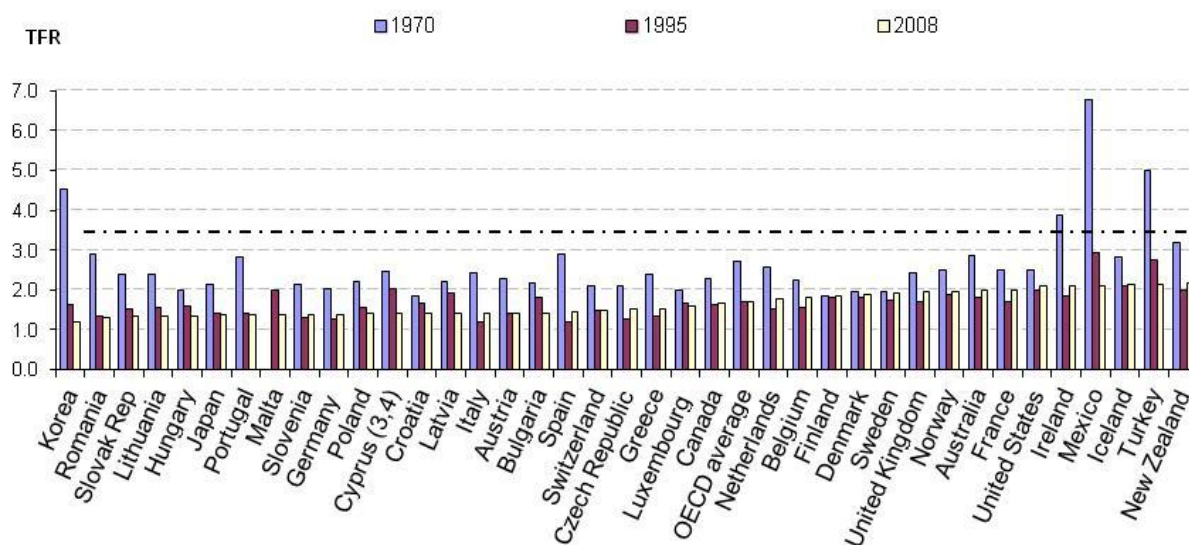
Figure 5 - Gender gap in employment rates, 2008



Notes: Part-time employment refers to persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week in their main job. Data include only persons declaring usual hours.

Source: OECD Family database, 2009

Figure 6 - Total fertility rates in 1970, 1995 and 2008



Countries are ranked in ascending order of fertility rates in 2008.

1 1990 for Croatia, Latvia, Malta.

2 2007 for Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania and Slovenia.

3 Footnote by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to "Cyprus" relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognizes the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue".

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Sources: National Statistical Offices and Eurostat Demographic Statistics for European non-OECD countries.

- *Organisational practices counteracting the positive aspects of family friendly initiatives at the workplace*

Workplace supports for reconciling work and parenting are available for mothers and fathers in an increasing number of large companies but at the same time wider societal gender ideology underpinning state and firms' policies assumes that employed mothers will be the primary caregivers in the family. Moreover gendered workplace cultures define ideal workers in ways that conflict with ideal mother norms. Therefore if men do not alter their working patterns 'family-friendly' flexible working is marginalised and detrimental to women's career prospects.

So far organisational culture, including stereotypes and deeply entrenched assumptions, can make it hard for women to pursue a career and have children.

We now turn to key drivers of change from 2010 onwards.

II. KEY DRIVERS OF CHANGE IN WORK/FAMILY LIFE ARRANGEMENTS FROM 2010 ONWARDS

After taking stock of the situation in work/family life balance, we identify the key drivers of change in this field from 2010 onwards.

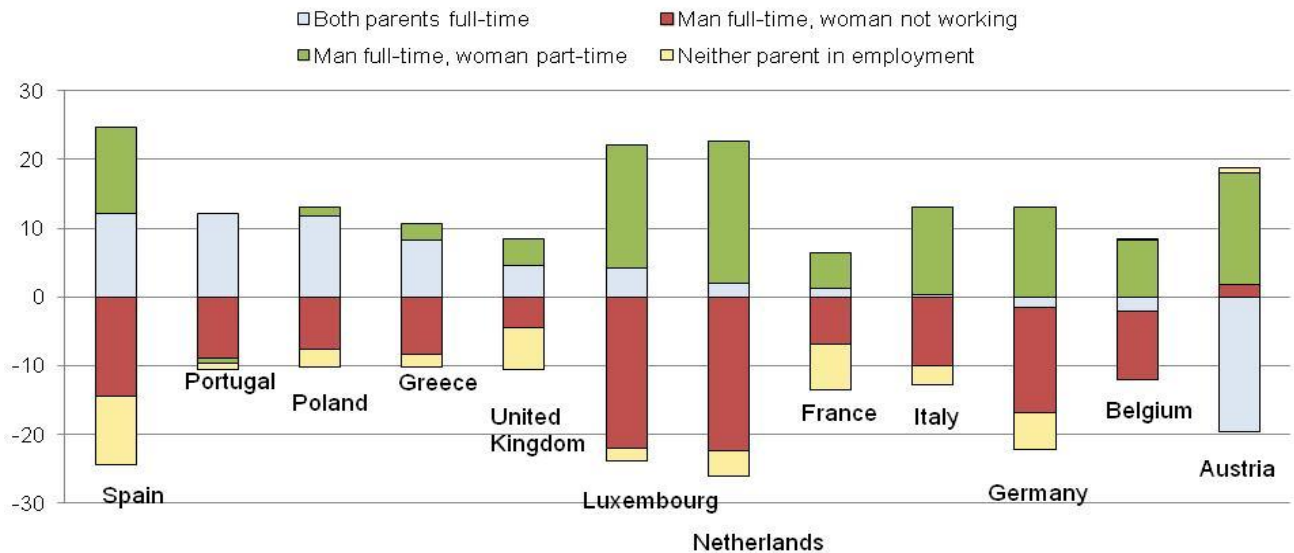
Their respective influence may be counteracting each other or contribute to move in the same direction. Beyond the steady trends and current key drivers, we should also be alert to new, potentially disruptive factors.

1. Demographic and social changes: their impact on work/life balance

- Women's labour force attachment is still strengthening. And one of the most important key drivers of change will be the persistent increase in mothers' employment rates. This trend seems irreversible.

Data on the distribution of employment patterns of couple families with a child under six for 1984, 1994 and 2007 (Table 9 in Annex and Figure 7, page 22) show that in all countries, except Austria, the number of one-earner families significantly declined. In many countries, in particular Belgium, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, this was due to the growth of one-and-a-half earner families. In Austria, however, the growth of one-and-half earner families was at the expense of dual full-time earner families. In Greece, Poland and Portugal the proportion of one-and-a-half earner couples has changed little; in these countries, as in Spain, full-time dual-earner couples are the fastest growing group of couple families. Low average female earnings are strong incentives for working full-time (OECD, *Employment Outlook*, 2010). Moreover, contrary to France, Germany or the Netherlands, employment legislation does not promote this employment status.

Figure 7 - Change in the distribution of employment status among couple households from 1994 to 2007



Source: ELFS

- Labour force participation of the people aged over 65 also varies across OECD countries. While most European countries and Canada exhibit quite low rates of labour market participation for this age group, rates are considerably higher in the US, Japan and Korea. Looking forward to 2030, these countries will also experience different severities of ageing, with different implications for labour market adjustment. For example, in terms of population ageing the US occupies the middle ground internationally, experiencing what will be a relatively moderate change in shares of the elderly. Moreover, it has attained labour force participation rates among the over 65s which are well above those of many other OECD countries. Many European countries, by contrast, will experience moderate to high population ageing, but currently show very low rates of labour market participation among elderly workers.

- Due to expected increases in the rates of labour force participation for men and women aged 65 and over (mainly as an outcome of the pension systems), support and assistance provided by (mostly) women in their sixties may be heavily constrained in the near future.

- The overall postponement of births, a strategy for establishing a solid foothold in the labour market prior to becoming a mother or a father will also have far-reaching consequences on the work/life balance of future middle-aged women.

Enhancing women's employment: an issue likely to be higher on the policy agenda than over the last decade

- As a result of the future decline of the workforce (see the following paragraph) and to limit the flows of immigrants (a controversial and political issue) promoting women's employment will be at stake.

- Against this background, the European Parliament is pushing hard to bring in longer EU minimum standards for maternity leave⁶. But MEPs are likely to face stiff resistance from some EU member states, particularly the UK who is worried about the costs involved in this latest plan. The Commission is currently drafting a directive on parental leave too.

2. Key drivers on the labour market and at the workplace: changes in working and employment conditions

Going hand in hand with demographic changes, the flow of new people entering the workforce is slowing

- For instance, in Germany, over the period 1998-2009 the working age population has been decreasing, for those aged 15-64 years, by 2.6 per cent (Ziemann, 2010). In Japan, since 2001, the labour force has undergone sharp contractions (Véron, 2008).

- In the US, annual labour force growth rates (including growth due to immigration) in the next ten years are predicted to be only about half of what they were during the last decade (Toossi, 2005).

- However this trend could be offset by future increases in employment rates of people aged over 65. For instance, in the US, according to the latest survey 'The 2010 Retirement Confidence Survey' carried out by the Employee Benefit Research Institute (2010⁷) the percentage of workers who expect to continue to work after age 65 has increased over time, from 11 percent in 1991 to 19 percent in 2000, and 33 percent in 2010. Among the reasons given for the change by workers postponing retirement, the most often cited are:

- The poor economy (29 percent).
- A change in employment situation (22 percent).
- Inadequate finances or can't afford to retire (16 percent).
- The need to make up for losses in the stock market (12 percent).

However, the signs are that older workers will increasingly remain active over the longer term. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics expects the labour market participation of men aged 65-74 to increase by almost 5 percentage points this decade, reaching over 34 percent by 2018. The same age group of women is projected to rise by 6 percentage points to 27 percent by 2018.

The growing demand for new skilled workers

- Competition for qualified and well trained staff will be intensifying. In Europe, for example, significant increases in demand for higher-and-medium skilled occupations is projected to 2020 (see CEDEFOP 2008). Similarly in Australia through to 2025 (see VECCI, 2009) and the U.S. (U.S.

⁶ On 3 October 2008 the European Commission proposed increasing compulsory maternity leave to 18 weeks, of which six would have to be taken immediately after childbirth. It also recommended that member states pay women their full salary during this leave period (though the Commission would not be able to enforce this). According to the Commission, this plan would give women "more flexibility over when to take the non-compulsory portion of their leave (before or after childbirth) and would thus no longer be obliged to take a specific portion of the leave before childbirth, as is presently the case in some member states".

⁷ Retrieved from http://www.ebri.org/pdf/briefspdf/EBRI_IB_03-2010_No340_RCS.pdf

Bureau of Labor Statistics). This trend may favour skilled employees in relation to their power relationships with their employers or supervisors: they will be able to put them under pressure and to be provided with family-friendly arrangements at the workplace.

- As far as the shortfall of qualified workers is concerned, Germany is an emblematic country. An increasingly competitive economic environment served to highlight a chronic shortfall of qualified staff in German enterprises and the potential for filling this gap by increasing female participation in the labour market was not lost on employers. Additionally, a burgeoning low wage service sector was also in desperate need of staff and again it was hoped that women could help make up the shortfall. In acknowledgement of this untapped potential, employer organisations gave their full backing to the Family Ministry, which was led by Renate Schmidt (SPD) from 2002 to 2006. Her successor Ursula von der Leyen (CDU) has continued the policies initiated by her predecessor despite her conservative party affiliation. When a proposal was made to triple the number of places available in crèches by the year 2013 it received the full backing of the President of the BASF group as well as industry leaders from Bosch and Thyssen-Krupp (Fagnani, Math, 2010).

- In many countries large companies now develop flexible working arrangements (FWAs) including reduced hours schemes, to meet business needs for recruitment and retention of women employees with young children.

- Concerns about the under representation of women in science and engineering (SET), especially at senior levels and their tendency to opt out of SET careers in increasing numbers (European Commission, 2006) contribute to a business case for enhancing flexible working and gender equity and hence a further contextual driver for change.

The growing educational divide in mothers' employment: going hand in hand with a polarization with respect to the uptake of family-friendly measures?

In many countries, research suggests that over the past two decades, the mothers' employment patterns have developed differently between the different educational groups. Konietzka, and Kreyenfeld (2010), for instance, demonstrate that, in Germany, *while full-time employment rates declined among all educational groups*, the most pronounced changes have occurred among less educated mothers. These authors assume that two factors have contributed to this divide: 1) labour market opportunities for the less educated have been steadily deteriorating and 2) they have often taken up policy options like parental leave schemes which can be combined with a part time job.

This polarization with respect to the uptake of family-friendly measures can also be observed in France: the less educated are over-represented among the recipients of the childrearing benefit and the beneficiaries of parental leave whereas the highly educated mothers – together with a stronger motivation – mostly resume their full time job after the maternity leave and can rely on alternative options to combine a job with family commitments (Fagnani, Math, 2009). Evidence-based research has also shown that take-up rates of care leave for care of sick children are much higher among low educated women than among their highly educated counterparts.

Dramatic organisational changes at the workplace are taking place

Against the background of the development of “post-Fordist” organisations (epitomised by knowledge-based organisations) the nature of the workplace has been evolving and dramatic organisational changes in companies and enterprises are taking place. These shifts already have strong implications on the work/family life balance of employees.

Number of hours worked: long working hours versus involuntary part-time jobs

Although average annual hours actually worked per person in employment has been declining over the last three decades (OECD, 2010), differences within the workforce and between countries in these regards are large.

- Results of the WORKS project (2009)⁸, in relation to working time, highlight a tendency towards de-standardisation and increasing differentiation of temporal models: with an increase in atypical hours, flexitime, and shortened as well as lengthened working hours.
- Organisational changes at the workplace has been accompanied by an increase in the share of long working hours (defined as 45 or 47 or more hours a week), a common trend while overtime work has increased steadily in recent years.
- The US – often mentioned as “a 24/7 economy” – has been a forerunner in changes in working arrangements. The typical American middle-income family put in an average of 11 more hours a week in 2006 than it did in 1979 (Williams, Boushey, 2010). Against this background the negative effect of the “time-greedy nature” of the workplace and the long-hour culture have often been denounced (Gornick, Hegewisch, 2010).
- In the US, 38 percent of professional-managerial men now work 50 or more hours a week. Men in the middle are next most likely to work long hours: 23 percent do—up from 21 percent 30 years ago (William, Boushey, 2010). 14 percent of professional- managerial women and 32 percent of professional-managerial single mothers work 50 or more hours. This trend reverses among low-income families, with 16 percent of men working long hours 30 years ago compared to 9 percent today.
- More than ever full time in high-powered careers (often requiring 24/7 availability) typically involves 50 or more hours a week, while the career and income penalties for “part-time” work seem to be higher in the US than elsewhere.
- The fourth European working conditions survey carried out in 2005 (Eurofound, 2009) shows that long working hours remain a predominantly male phenomenon in Europe and one which affects self-employed workers to a greater extent than employees. In terms of occupations, senior managers and agriculture and fishery workers are those who most often work more than 48 hours.
- In all European countries, given the freedom to organise their time at will, most entrepreneurs, executives, professionals and high-level management choose (or have) to work long hours which frequently spill over into the evenings and weekends.
- It comes therefore as no surprise that in Germany, for instance, 65 per cent of fathers (living with children aged under 18 years) would like to work less than they currently do compared to 41 per cent of the mothers (who mostly work part-time)⁹ though the average of hours worked per person declined by 3.2 per cent from 2008 to 2009 as an outcome of the decision of social partners to give priority to the employment protection (Ziemann 2010).

⁸ This research investigated how the globalisation is affecting working conditions in the EU. See http://worksproject.be/documents/006193_WORKS_D9.2.2_CEE_updated_001.pdf

⁹ Source : [Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach \(2010\)](#).

Table 2 - Men in the US working 50 or more hours per week, late 1970s and late 2000s

	Low income	Middle income	Professional
Late 1970s	16%	21%	34%
Late 2000s	9%	23%	38%

Source: Heather Boushey and Jeff Chapman's analysis of Miriam King, Steven Ruggles, Trent Alexander, Donna Leicach, and Matthew Sobek. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Minneapolis: Minnesota Population Center, 2009.

Moreover, it should be kept in mind that labour force participation not only involves time spent at the workplace, but often implies considerable time spent commuting (see *infra*).

- Conversely, in a context of a dramatic increase in the share of women working part-time (see Figure 10 in Annex) many low-wage workers can find only part-time work, and would like to work longer hours. As a matter of fact alongside the organisational changes at the workplace and the development of employer-driven flexibility, involuntary part time work has been on the rise in many OECD countries: in Germany for instance, from 2000 to 2008 the share of involuntary part-timers as a percentage of part-time employment has increased from 5.4 percent to 10.2 percent¹⁰. In Italy, Spain and Portugal this increase has been even more important.

Intensification of work: an aggravating factor for work/family life balance

- Besides this differentiation, the most important impact of global restructuring processes on the organisation of working time seems to be a growing intensification of work - not necessarily as a prolongation of working time but as a speeding up of pace and workloads.

- Results of the WORKS project (2009) show that for women, the benefits of the restructuring are ambivalent. While new opportunities are opened up in high-skilled 'knowledge work' these can only be taken up at the price of adopting a 'masculine' lifestyle, including long hours, intensification of work and 'a sacrifice of work/life balance'.

The development of non-standard working hours and/or unpredictable schedules: a challenge for workers with care-giving responsibilities

Changes in the patterns of work schedules have taken place in many countries.

- In the US, thirty percent of recently hired less-skilled employees frequently work weekend hours, with another 24 percent working them occasionally or sometimes. Fifteen percent work evening shifts, 4 percent night shifts, and 11 percent rotating shifts (Acs, Loprest, 2008). Most workers report that they work these shifts for their employers' convenience, not their own. While in some cases workers welcome non-traditional shifts because they allow them to forgo the use of paid child care, such

¹⁰ Source : http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=INVPT_I

split-shift schedules can put significant strain on workers' marriages and families, as well as on their health (Kaye, Grey, 2007).

- Even for people who work during traditional work hours, the hours of work have become less predictable. Lower-Basch (2008, p. 3) points out that "With just-in-time scheduling, sophisticated computer systems allow firms to fine-tune staffing levels hour by hour, in order to provide peak coverage as needed while minimizing the total payroll. This shifts the cost of inconsistent demands for labour onto the workers, requiring some workers to work mandatory overtime, while keeping others on call but paying them only for the hours in which their labour is needed. Many workers also face unpredictable schedules, often provided no more than a few days in advance."
- Often an unintentional by-product of employers' economic interests (Lesnard, 2008), off-scheduling within dual-earner couples is widespread and seems to be on the rise.
- In their research on the effect of the intensification of work for male and female employees, Fagan and Burchell (2002) also confirm that unsociable hours (and long hours) have significant negative effects on the work/life balance; the greater the level of non-standard hours the greater the dissatisfaction.
- Research on the impact of the French 35-hour laws (introduced in 2002-2003) on the work/family life balance of dual-earner parents having at least one child aged less than six years (Fagnani, Letablier, 2004) shows that those fathers or mothers, who had their working hours reduced due to the implementation of the laws, 58 % responded "Yes" to the question, "*Do you feel that the law on the 35 hours has made it easier for you to combine your family life with your working life?*" The figures were 59% among women and 55% among men respectively. However, the views of parents varied greatly depending on whether or not they had non-standard working hours (*i.e.* after 6.00 PM, before 8.00 AM or during the night). 61% of parents who had fixed and "standard" working hours felt that the reduction in working time had improved their daily lives, against only 50% of those who worked non-standard hours (Table 3).

Table 3 - The impact of the 35-hours laws in France: Parents' statement according to whether or not they work non-standard hours after the implementation of the laws*

	YES (has made it easier)	NO (has not made it easier)	TOTAL
Employees with non-standard working hours	50.4	49.6	100% (n=274)
Employees with standard working hours	64.1	35.9	100% (n=340)

Source: Fagnani, Letablier, 2004, Survey on "Reconciliation of Family and Working Life".

*The question was: "*For those who work outside the home: do you work regularly or occasionally outside normal working hours?*" (after 6.00 pm in the evening, at the end of the week, before 8.00 am in the morning or during the night)

p < 0.001 (significant at 0.1%)

This research also demonstrates that this impact is more positive where the organisation of the working time is regular, with manageable and predictable hours.

- It also confirms the heterogeneity of the impact of the 35-hour laws on the work/life balance. Concomitant to the introduction of the 35-hour laws has been legislation which has made implementation of work regulations more flexible. Diversity has been the rule in introducing new forms of work organisation. Against the background of unbalanced power relationships between employers and employees (taking into account the high unemployment rate and the low level of trade union representation in France) employees have sometimes been obliged to accept flexible working schedules and practices to which they traditionally objected. Therefore some of them have had to come to terms with flexible scheduling of their working time which doesn't always fit in with the operating hours of nursery schools or crèches. The aftermath of these changes in working conditions is that they often have to rely on complementary child care arrangements, particularly if the working hours of parents overlap, and have to use baby-sitters, grandparents or relatives. This situation serves to complicate the management of their daily lives, increasing the mother's stress and often leads to a rise in child care costs.
- Results (Fagnani, Letablier, 2004) confirm the dramatic role played by working conditions, working time schedules and the methods for introducing the RWT (Reduced Working Time) in the formation of respondents' opinions about the effect of the 35-hour week on family life. For instance, almost half of the respondents had their working hours imposed on them, while the others were able to negotiate, either through their trade unions or by choosing the hours themselves. Parents viewed the effect of the RWT on their family life to be positive where it had been possible to negotiate the working hours. They were more frequently discontented when their working hours had been imposed.
- Clearly, these results demonstrate that improving work/family life balance requires more than a simple reduction of hours worked for parents to feel comfortable with their work and family life balance. Other conditions are required, such as a conscientious organisation of working time that is compatible with family needs and childcare arrangements (Gornick, Hegewish, 2010).

The development of non standard working hours: a driver of change in the gender division of unpaid caring work?

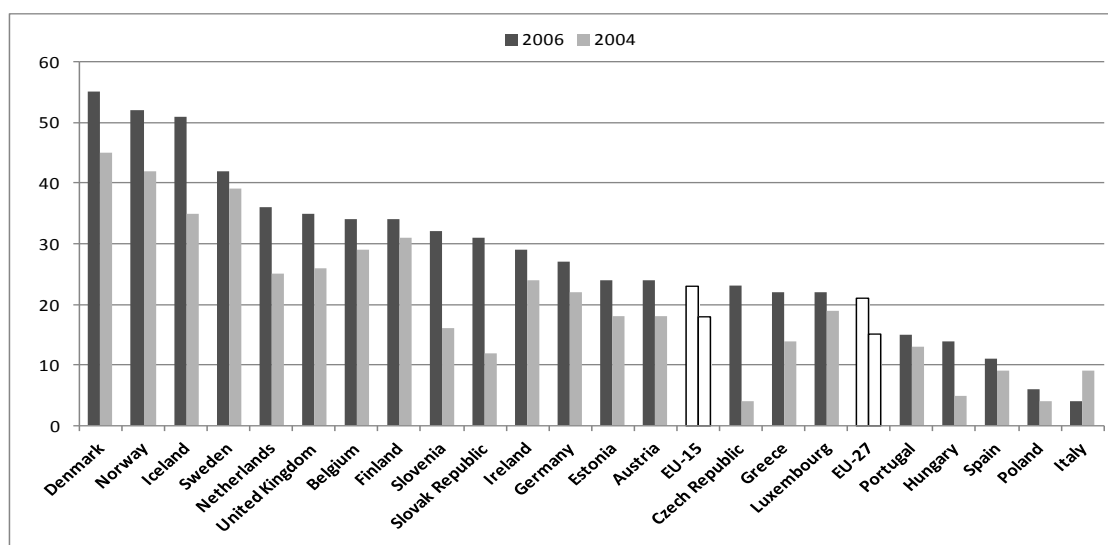
- Low-income working parents are sometimes deliberately choosing to work hours which don't overlap with one another so that one parent is able to remain at home with the children while the other is at work (Fagnani, 2010, Lesnard, 2008). Mothers with dependent children are sometimes able to structure their jobs (when they work in the retail or service sectors for instance) around their partners' employment, allowing them to take advantage of the fact that if their partner is at home while they are at work they needn't worry about finding outside help for childminding responsibilities. Correlatively, the amount of time these couples spend together is significantly lower than in other couples.
- These childcare strategies can however indirectly result in a more equal division of child care responsibilities than in couples with standard work hours.

The development of tele-work: progress or pitfall?

- The combination of rising rates of computer literacy over the coming years, further increases in broadband use, and continual adjustment to regulations and practices governing work schedules opens up huge potential for tele-work and telecommuting.
- Indeed recent years have seen tele-working and telecommuting expand quite significantly. For the period for which data are available, supply of tele-work has steadily increased in European countries

(Figure 8). In 2006, around 23% of enterprises in the EU-15 employed tele-workers (any location, but predominantly from home), compared to 16% in 2003. But looking across the OECD, there are considerable differences among countries in the share of companies offering telework arrangements.

Figure 8 - Share of companies offering tele-work arrangements



Source: OECD

- OECD analysis of available data point to three variables that determine a company's likeliness to offer tele-work: 1) location (country), 2) size, 3) industry sector.

1. With regards to country, there are clear differences between Northern European countries – Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Sweden– which have the highest shares of companies offering tele-work, and Southern and Eastern European countries – Italy, Poland, Spain, Hungary, Portugal – that are below the average.

2. Size of the company matters as large firms offer tele-work arrangements much more often than small- and medium-sized enterprises. This is confirmed throughout all countries. In Denmark, for instance, the share of large companies offering tele-work is double that of small enterprises. In Italy, the share is multiplied by a factor of 10.

3. The character of work is different in different industry sectors and not necessarily all types of work can benefit from tele-work. Highest rates of tele-working employees can be found in the audiovisual and content production sectors, real estate businesses and in utilities (gas, water, electricity). The utilities sector, in fact, has the highest share of companies with tele-work arrangements in place in a number of countries, e.g. the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Hungary, Spain.

- In the US, the number of people working for their employer from home or remotely rose from an estimated 12.4 million in 2006 to over 17 million in 2008, a 2-year increase of almost 40 percent and up almost 75 percent over three years. Data from the US Bureau of Labour Statistics for the period 2006-8 suggest the proportion of Americans tele-working at least once per month rose from 8 per cent to 11 per cent (Telework Trendlines 2009, WorldatWork, February 2009).

According to 2009 results from the American Time Use Survey (ATUS) released by the U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS)¹¹ in June 2010:

- On the days that they worked, 40 percent of employed people aged 25 and over with a bachelor's degree or higher did some work at home, compared with only 10 percent of those with less than a high school diploma.
- On the days that they worked, 24 percent of employed persons did some or all of their work at home. Men and women were about equally likely to do some or all of their work at home.
- A combination of factors appears to be at play: The proliferation of cheap high-speed and wireless Internet access; rising fuel and commuting costs; and the trend by employers to embrace work-life balance solutions. With respect to the last point, across all the countries surveyed by Ofcom in 2007 (Ofcom, 2008), more women than men used the Internet.

It may come as no surprise therefore that a large proportion of telecommuters/teleworkers are people wishing to take advantage of the flexibility offered by these arrangements in taking care of dependent persons (children, elderly relatives) in the home while maintaining effective levels of work performance. Recent research conducted by the US General Services Administration among employees tele-working at home showed that some 53% of respondents were taking care of dependents at home, of which more than half indicated that tele-working was beneficial to their caretaking responsibilities.

The growth in precarious, non-standard and low paid jobs and the diversification in employment conditions

- A further increase in labour force participation seems to be connected with a greater variety of employment relationships (Schmid, 2010).
- Precarious jobs have been developing quite rapidly in Europe and Asia, not only in the form of fixed-term contracts but also in the shape of temporary agency work and involuntary part-time work. It was partly shaped by policies and employment-related (de)regulations. In Germany, for instance, from 1998 to 2009 the share of these atypical forms of employment rose from 16,2 per cent to 24,8 per cent¹² (and women are over-represented among them, in particular they represent 67 per cent of those who exclusively hold “mini-jobs”, Table 4). Since the deregulation which occurred in 2003 (through the Hartz reforms), the number of temporary agency workers in particular has significantly increased: from 371,309 to 560,000 in 2009¹³ (Source: Destatis, 2010). During the 2004-2007 period, their numbers also significantly increased in Sweden, the Netherlands and Austria (respectively by 69.7%, 48.4% and 34.3%).
- Within the EU, low skilled people are overrepresented in non-standard employment with great variation, however, across member states: about 12 percentage point overrepresentation in Denmark, 8

¹¹ <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/atus.nr0.htm>

¹² Source: Statistisches Bundesamt <http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/17/027/1702790.pdf>

¹³ Source: http://www.boeckler.de/pdf_fof/S-2009-327-3-1.pdf and <http://www.boeckler-boxen.de/5982.htm>

in Germany, and only 3 in the Netherlands (six percentage points being the EU-average) (Schmid, 2010).

- Whether temporary-help jobs improve labour market outcomes for low-skilled workers remains a controversial issue among academics. Evidence provided by research is heterogeneous.
- In many countries, the increase in female labour market participation has recently been accompanied by the growth of less secure jobs.

Table 4 - Increase in the numbers of 'atypical job', of 'Mini-jobs' and of standard jobs in Germany: 2002-2009 (in Millions)

	2002	2009
Atypical jobs*	4,13	7,59
Those <u>exclusively</u> with Mini-jobs**	4,18	4,9
Standard jobs***	27,261	27,487

Source: Bundesagentur für Arbeit und Destatis, 2010

http://www.boeckler.de/pdf_fof/S-2009-327-3-1.pdf

**Fixed-term contract, temporary agency-work, mini-jobs (workers can however combine a mini-job with a standard job), part-time jobs (20 hours or less per week)*

*** Paid not more than 400 Euros per month, not insurable and not taxable*

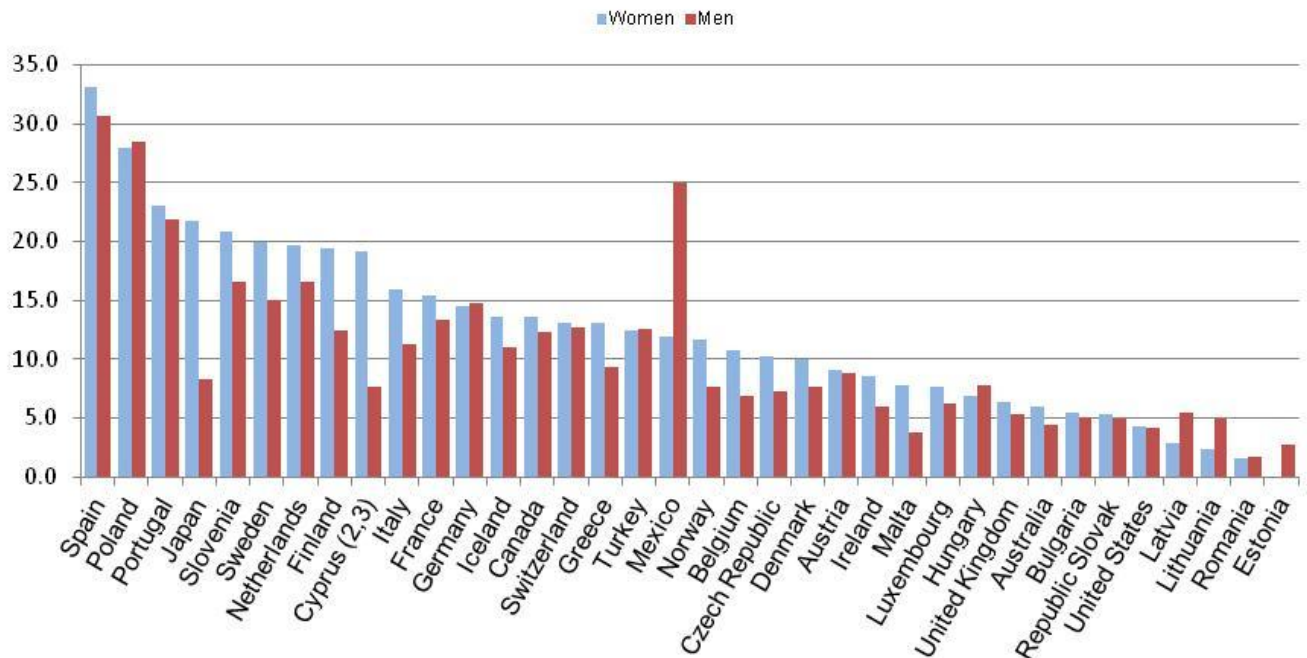
**** Insurable ('Sozialversicherungspflichtig Beschäftigte')*

- In Japan, Korea, Germany and Spain, these forms of employment are quite widespread among women and especially among married women and single mothers. Indeed, in Japan non-standard employment accounts for more than half of women's total employment. In the context of the on-going shift to service-related activities in most if not all OECD countries, and in the absence of quite far-reaching policy changes, it seems unlikely that the future will bring a significant change in direction.
- Results of recent research also show that employment conditions are becoming increasingly fragmented, even within companies. In IT services, for example, workers formerly employed under the same contracts are becoming differentiated workforces with major variations in their terms and conditions.
- In France, for example, the proportion of employees working part-time was notably higher for employees with short-term or temporary contracts than for those with stable jobs. Between 2003 and 2007, the share of part-time employees among subsidized jobs in the public sector has risen substantially, from 60 per cent in 2003 to 87 per cent in 2007 (Fagnani, Letablier, 2009).

- Like in most OECD countries, in France, low-educated single mothers are especially affected by underemployment (defined as part-time workers wishing to work more, being available for working longer hours and looking for additional hours of work according to the ILO definition). Often, they are offered only part-time jobs, mostly in the care sector and retail trade. Although significant proportion of these jobs are stable and associated with open-ended contracts (for instance, in the booming retail sector), they are still characterised by hard working conditions especially as far as the work schedules are concerned (Fagnani, Letablier, 2009).
- In Germany, there has been a dramatic rise in the number of low-wage workers over the last decade: in 2008, 21 percent of all workers were paid less than 9.06 Euros (gross) per hour (Source: WSI, 2010). Among the workers with precarious jobs almost half of them (49.2 per cent) were paid 9,85 Euros per hour (compared to 11 per cent of the people with standard jobs, '*Normalarbeitsverhältnis*') and women are especially affected. Between 1998 and 2008, the number of workers living under poverty rate increased by 58 per cent (Ziemann, 2010). Therefore, unless childcare provision is heavily subsidised (by the state or at the company level), parents with low earnings prospects either rely on relatives, informal care, reduce their working hours or cannot afford to be in employment and are obliged to live on welfare.
- There is a growing segmentation of the employment market along with a growing divide in terms of earnings and working conditions between on one hand highly-skilled and well-trained workers and on the other hand low-skilled workers.
- The development of "internal" and "external" flexibility at the workplace has gone hand in hand with an increase in the share of temporary agency workers in many OECD countries. In Germany, for instance, the number of "*Zeitarbeiter*" has increased by 100% between 2000 and 2007 (though starting from a lower level than other countries) according to a survey carried out by the Bertelsmann Stiftung (2010)¹⁴. Currently one third of the jobs that German companies intend to create are under the form of "*Zeitarbeit*" (Source: Süddeutsche Zeitung, July 30, 2010, p. 17).

¹⁴ Retrieved from http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/cps/rde/xchg/bst/hs.xsl/nachrichten_100801.htm

Figure 9 - Incidence of temporary employment in dependent employment, 2007



Countries are ranked by decreasing incidence of temporary work for women

1) 2006 for Australia; 2005 for the United States; and, 2004 for Japan.

2) and 3) see corresponding notes in chart LMF1.6.A

Source: OECD Labour Force Statistics and ELFS for EU-countries outside the OECD

- A slow-moving trend is taking place in a number of OECD countries: an increasing number of low-wage workers take on two or more jobs because they cannot get sufficient hours at any single job. In the US, around 15 percent of low-wage workers hold more than one part-time job. Moreover multiple jobholders are almost twice as likely to work on an average weekend day as are single jobholders – 59% compared with 32% (U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2010).

- These precarious jobs, often low paid, make it more difficult to plan sufficiently in advance the organisation of childcare arrangements especially if the partner cannot afford or does not want to reduce her or his own professional commitments. In other words, instability on the labour market, irregularity of work schedules, short-term contract and low earnings are at odds with a long-term strategy related to work/life balance and might be detrimental to the children's wellbeing.

Trends in commuting times: increased spatial constraints

- Time spent to commute from home to workplace is really at stake when it comes to the management of working parents' everyday life. When travelling to work is too time-consuming it may deter wage and salaried workers - women especially - from work full time or even encourage them to stop working.

- As a result of urban sprawl and increasing social segregation (especially the gentrification phenomenon of the inner cities), the average commuting time has been increasing in most of the OECD countries.

- In Belgium, France, Italy, Japan, Poland, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States, male workers spent on average more than one hour commuting per weekday. In most countries men spent more time on commuting than women, but there are notable cross-country differences (Figure 11 in Annex). On average Japanese men spent far more time commuting than women, while in Finland there is hardly any difference.

The reasons why commuting times are also shorter for mothers than for fathers (Table 5) are: 1) in order for the mother to be able to combine a job with family commitments (especially when children are under compulsory school-age) working couples most often give priority to the workplace of the mother so that she has to spend less time in transportation than her partner. 2) After a birth working mothers (especially low income mothers) who live far away from their workplace often try to find a workplace closer to home (see also chapter 1) to alleviate their time constraints (Fagnani, 1986). These reasons also contribute to explain that in almost all countries mothers with dependent children spend less time travelling commuting than childless women (OECD Family Database, 2010).

**Table 5 - Time spent commuting, by gender and the presence of children in the household
(with children under age school)**

Time spent in minutes in a week day, commuting respondents

	MEN	WOMEN	Ratio
Men/Women*			
Belgium	71	62	1.15
Bulgaria	68	56	1.12
Estonia	59	52	1.07
Finland	44	45	1.02
France	65	50	1.11
Germany	62	48	1.29
Italy	63	54	1.12
Japan	77	58	1.60
Latvia	70	50	1.15
Lithuania	59	48	1.11
Norway	62	47	1.14
Poland	62	54	1.05
Slovenia	51	46	1.04
Spain	66	59	1.03
Sweden	48	44	1.04
United Kingdom	66	43	1.25
United States	:	:	1.30

Source: OECD, 2010

Family database www.oecd.org/els/social/family/database

* All commuting respondents with or without children

Tensions between paid work and unpaid work are exacerbating

- Taken into account all these changes over the last two decades or so, it should come as no surprise that between 1996 and 2007 the share of employed individuals who “strongly agree” or “agree” that their work is too demanding and stressful has significantly been on the rise in most European countries except in Denmark and Finland where this share has been decreasing (Table 6).

Table 6 - Share of employed individuals who “strongly agree” or “agree” that their work is too demanding and stressful: evolution 1996-2007

Countries	1996	2007	Countries
AT	39	46.9	AT
BE	26.8	32.5	BE
DK	28.5	27.7	DK
FI	31.8	24.4	FI
FR	35.9	40.4	FR
DE	35.1	43.5	DE
EL	57.4	62.8	EL
IE	26.2	36.1	IE
IT	40.6	48.8	IT
NO		19.6	NO
NL	23.2	23.4	NL
PL		44	PL
PT	34.4	59.4	PT
RO		44.1	RO
SI		50.7	SI
ES	24.4	45.6	ES
SE	39.7	43.1	SE
TR		71.7	TR
UK	42	32.5	UK

Source: Eurofound, 2010.

- Americans report sharply higher levels of work-family conflict than do citizens of other industrialized countries. Fully 90 percent of American mothers and 95 percent of American fathers report work-family conflict (Williams, Boushey, 2010).

- We have already pointed out that patterns of working hours are important dimensions of work/family reconciliation attitudes and practices, though with large differences in patterns across OECD countries (Table 1, page 15). But it is important to keep in mind that against the background of the economic crisis, power relations between employers and employees are unbalanced due to the scarcity of job creation, rise in the rates of unemployment and the decline in the rates of union membership (less than 10 per cent of the workforce; 6 per cent in the private sector in France for instance). This context makes it difficult to resist the demands of the employers in particular as far as work schedules are concerned (Fagnani, 2010).

- It is illustrating that in most European countries the share of people (employed individuals) for whom “it has been difficult to fulfill their family responsibilities because of the amount of time spent on the job several times a week or several times a month” has significantly increased from 1996 to 2007 (Table 7)

Table 7 - Share of people (employed individuals) for whom it has been difficult to fulfill their family responsibilities because of the amount of time spent on the job "several times a week" or "several times a month" Evolution 1996-2007

Countries	1996	2003	2007	Countries
AT	24.5	20.4	31.6	AT
BE	12.3	26.2	28.1	BE
DK	17.1	18.1	21.2	DK
FI	18.6	14.5	19.7	FI
FR	26.7	22.4	17.3	FR
DE	18.9	26.2	24.3	DE
EL	42.3	35.4	45.7	EL
IE	21.7	22.7	25	IE
IT	20.9	27.3	23.9	IT
LV		57.6	47.1	LV
LT		37.3	39.7	LT
NO			23	NO
NL	12.1	19.1	29.2	NL
PL		44.5	43.4	PL
PT	26.3	37.7	28.8	PT
RO		37.6	46.6	RO
SI		38.2	42.6	SI
ES	32.5	31.3	38.1	ES
SE	22.7	25.2	18.5	SE
TR		51.1	52.5	TR
UK	21	30.3	28.5	UK

SSource: EQLS, 2007

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/qualityoflife/eurlife/index.php?template=3&radioindic=26&idDomain=2>

In Finland and Denmark this increase was however less important than in other countries. Sweden and France stand out as they demonstrate a decline in this share. In Sweden regulation on working hours remain strict and women (who account for a large share of the workforce) are mostly employed in the public sector (see chapter 1). In France, the 35-hours laws are one of the explanatory factors of this phenomenon.

- On the other hand, along the expansion of tele-work and the growth of faster communication technologies boundaries between family life and paid work are currently blurring: indeed the fourth European Working Conditions survey (Eurofound, 2010) shows that over the past five years the number of workers “contactable” in relation to their main paid job outside normal working hours has

increased. 11 percent of men with supervisory responsibilities for instance have to cope with out-of-hours contact every day.

- Nonetheless the impact of tele-work is ambivalent: its development could at the same time contribute to alleviate time and spatial constraints faced by an increasing number of workers.

3. Other key drivers: towards a new “gender contract”?

- In all OECD countries there is an enduring asymmetry in family involvement and the expectation that women engage in more care-giving than men is widespread and still firmly entrenched. Motherhood still makes a big difference to women’s working patterns. And raising children continues therefore to have indirect effects on mothers’ wages (Letablier and al, 2008, Meurs and al, 2008). Of course, national context matters, especially the normative context in which decision making is embedded. For instance, J. Hook (2010) demonstrated that, in countries where there is more public child care and men are eligible to take parental leave, women do less time-inflexible housework than in countries where work hours and parental leave are long.

- This “unfinished revolution” as dubbed by K. Gerson (2010), partly explains the persistence of the phenomenon of the “leaky pipeline” that takes place even in large companies well known for implementing gender neutral family-friendly initiatives and for promoting gender equality (Lewis, Fagnani, 2010).

However

- The long-established gender pay gap is narrowing since the 1990s. It mirrors the increase in female educational achievement levels and better career prospects for well trained women as they are moving into an expanding range of highly skilled occupations. It has gone in tandem with deep cultural changes.

- Correlatively there is a growing share of dual earner couples where the woman earns more than her partner (or has similar earnings). A large body of research-based literature has provided evidence that this phenomenon is taking place in many OECD countries (Brennan et al., 2001, Drago et al., 2005, Bloemen, Stancanelli 2007, Meisenbach, 2009). In the US the share of “female-breadwinner households” was estimated at around one out of four (Drago et al. 2005) or even to one third (Pappenheim, Graves 2005) of dual-earner couples in 2004.

In France this share was estimated to be one out of six (Bloemen, Stancanelli 2007). In Germany, Brehmer et al. (2010) have shown that among dual-earner couples where both partners work full-time, 8.1 percent are couples where the woman earns 60 percent or more of the total income of the couple. This share is higher in East Germany than in West Germany.

This phenomenon may both mirror and trigger significant changes in power relationships within couples and is likely to have an impact on the patterns of the gender division of unpaid work

- Moreover younger men increasingly expect to get more involved than their fathers in family life, and a number of empirical studies show that they are making work-life balance more of an issue when selecting jobs.

Work/life balance policies: a persisting kaleidoscope...

- As far as work/life balance policies are concerned, some differences between countries have persisted in the timing, pace and direction of changes (see my “Scoping paper”, 2009).

This is reflected for instance in the gender gap in employment rates which varies considerably across countries. In 2008, it was greatest in the Mediterranean countries, Japan, Korea, Japan and Turkey, and smallest in the Nordic countries (see *supra*).

- The persistence of these differences is partly attributable to values and norms –that both shape and mirror social policies – acting as sticking points holding back further change. It takes indeed a long time before they evolve. As White points out “Norms comprise a set of rules and principles such that when decision-makers act, they are guided by views and questions of appropriateness and not just consequences. For example, is it “appropriate” for women to work outside the home? Does child care detract from women’s roles as mothers? Are children “harmed” by non-maternal care? Is it appropriate for governments to fund such programs? Actors’ actions and their thinking can be shaped by those extant norms to the point where their own interests are viewed through these normative lenses.”

...but a convergence across OECD countries too

- Childcare policies have undergone significant changes everywhere and boundaries between the State, the community, the family and the market have been redrawn in this domain. At the same time across OECD countries a growing share of companies are promoting family-friendly measures, in particular in countries (in Japan for instance) where governments remain reluctant to intervene in the workplace because of the fear of increasing labour costs and in the belief that this is an area best left to employers and employees to negotiate.

- Companies are likely to play an important role in work/life balance policies in the near future. Indeed extensive research documents that the mismatch between work and life today leads to high and expensive levels of absenteeism and attrition as well as to decreases in productivity. Based on a literature review, recent report of Gornick and Hegewisch (2010) underlines the many aspects of the impact of lack of flexible working options on employees, employers and economy (see Box 1). They demonstrate the enormous potential benefits that result from the implementation of quality flexible working options.

- Moreover for many companies, a family-friendly work pattern has therefore simply become a new way of attracting talent (see *supra*).

Box 1 – The Impact of Workplace Flexibility on Employees and Employers - Summary

Impact of Lack of Flexible Working Options on Women (and Men)	Impact of Lack of Flexible Working Options on Employers	Impact of Lack of Flexible Working Options on Economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May force women/ men with caregiving responsibilities out of labor market, or into secondary labor market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May lead to loss of skilled / experienced workers - Higher levels of absenteeism lower motivation - Less diverse workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May lead to loss of human capital - May exacerbate skill shortages - Reduce social insurance and tax revenues
Impact of Quality Flexible Working Options on Women (and Men)	Impact of Quality Flexible Working Options on Employers	Impact of Quality Flexible Working Options on Economy
<p>Potential Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain employment continuity (and seniority related benefits) - Continue work at skill/ experience level - Less work/ family conflict (improved health outcomes) - Maintain own social insurance and pension contributions - May allow return to education and learning, in combination with employment <p>Potential Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced career progression (discrimination) - Where part-time, reduced earnings 	<p>Potential Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased motivation and commitment - Better labor scheduling (and possibly reduced overtime expenditure) - Reduced absenteeism; - Reduced employee turnover - Reduced costs for recruitment, induction and retraining of new staff - For home based work: possibly reduced facility/ building costs <p>Potential Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cross-training (to deal with absences) - Management/ supervisory training - Amendment to payroll/ administrative systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased female labor force participation - Workforce and human capital development - Reduced skill shortages - Increased social insurance and tax revenues. - Combined with other work family supports, may maintain fertility rates

Source: Gornick, Hegewisch, 2010, page 27

- In Germany, according to the latest wave of the representative survey “*Enterprise Monitor on Family-friendliness*”, the awareness of German companies concerning family-friendliness has steadily grown over recent years. (Klammer, Letablier, 2007). According to a recent survey, over 90 percent of employees with children state that family-friendly employer’s initiatives are equally or more important than their earnings’ level (GfK, 2010).

- In Sweden, a recent survey (Haas, Hwang, 2010) shows that 41 percent of companies reported in 2006 that they had made a formal decision to encourage fathers to take parental leave, up from only 2 percent in 1993.

- There is still however an uneven dissemination of work-family life policies among employers, in particular a divide between large enterprises and small and medium sized companies, between the public and the private sectors. Gornick and Hegewisch, (2010, p. 32) underline that “Even though employer surveys, employee surveys, business case studies, as well as the growing body of more systematic evaluations of the impact of alternative work arrangements all suggest that such policies cause no negative impact on company performance and might result in substantial benefits, the implementation of such policies both within and across employers remains highly uneven, particularly in the private sector.”

III. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING POLICY MAKERS TO 2030 IN REGARDS TO WORK/FAMILY LIFE BALANCE

1. Overlapping and distinctive challenges

Little room for manoeuvre in work/family life balance policies if there is a continuing tightening of public expenditure

In light of continuing tightening of public expenditure (to reduce the public deficit for instance), there are a number of upcoming issues that will need to be addressed and new innovative ways will be required to face challenges.

- In Germany, from 2011 onwards, in the context of a decrease in public expenditure (*Sparpaket*) the amount of the “*Elterngeld*” will be reduced from 67% to 65% for those who earned more than 2,200 euros per month before the leave. Moreover recipients of the Hartz IV benefit will be no more eligible for this leave benefit.
- In Austria, despite strong criticism emanating from the powerful catholic federal family association, the government recently decided (July 2010) to introduce funding cutbacks up to 1.5 billion Euros in family policy until 2014.
- In a context of restrictive public spending policies there will be a diminishing room for manoeuvre in work/family-life balance policies. Difficult trade-offs and hard choices will have to be made. In France, for instance, recently abandoned were measures announced by President Sarkozy in February 2009 to reform the parental leave scheme. Taking into consideration the detrimental effects that extended leave can have on women’s professional careers, he proposed to decrease the duration of the leave from three years to only one. This reduction in time was to be offset by an increase in the amount of the benefit. That this attempt to move gradually in the direction of the Swedish scheme had already been proposed by a number of reports and legislative initiatives over the previous decade counted for little. Not only were the reforms strongly opposed by the family associations as represented by the UNAF (*Union Nationale des Associations Familiales*) but, perhaps more importantly, were derailed by the fact that they would have led to a dramatic rise in demand for formal childcare arrangements that the CNAF and local authorities would have been unable to meet in the short term both for budgetary restrictions and as a result of the shortage of skilled workers in the caring sector (Fagnani, Math, 2010).

- Dealing with these constraints will be all the more difficult if we consider that a triad of time policy, transfer policy and infrastructural policy is necessary to ensure a sustainable family policy (Bertram et al., 2005)

Quality of childcare provision is at stake

- Over the last decades OECD and Unicef have pleaded the case for broadly-available, high-quality child care. This should be achieved by providing developmentally-stimulating programmes to young children while also enabling mothers to be in paid employment.

Adopting the social investment perspective (advocated by Gøsta Esping-Andersen) Kimberly Morgan (2009, p. 45) points out that “Child care is a linchpin of the social investment approach, which seeks to shift the emphasis of public spending from passive transfers towards active, human-capital boosting investments.” But in many countries there still are a lot of impeding factors in pursuing or ensuring a social investment strategy.

- Objectives of encouraging women’s participation in the workplace have been pursued almost everywhere. This has resulted in a growing demand for places in formal childcare provision. In order to meet parents’ needs, governments have been therefore prone to put the quantitative component at the forefront and to neglect the qualitative component.
- In the UK for instance reliance on inadequately-subsidised private providers has produced the outcome that prevails in the US: services of irregular (and often inferior) quality that are staffed by a low-wage and unstable workforce, yet that are still expensive for parents – particularly for lower-income families (Lower-Basch, 2008, Penn 2007). Indeed, as mentioned by Morgan (2009), in the UK the 2006 Childcare Act explicitly bars local authorities from providing child care directly as long as there are private actors willing to do so. Yet, given the personnel-intensive nature of childcare services (e.g. high staff-child ratios), private childcare markets are difficult to sustain without extensive subsidies (which is the case in France). Indeed, such markets generally emerge in countries with a low-wage labour force, high degree of income inequality, and/or a large (and often illegal) immigrant population that can serve as household and day care centre workers.
- Against the background of cost containment in public policies and budgetary constraints quality of childcare might be therefore at stake even in countries well known for promoting high quality childcare centres. In this regard France is an emblematic country: recent decisions were made at the expense of quality in childcare provision (Fagnani, Math, 2010) (see Box 2).

Box 2 - Recent decisions in French Childcare Policies: 2009-2010

In 2009, the government decided to create and support a new type of collective arrangement, called “*jardins d’éveil*”, where 2 to 3 year-old children can be cared for. Criticisms were high since the quality of this type of childcare will be lower than in *crèches* where the statutory child-to-staff ratio is 8 while it is 12 in *jardins d’éveil*. This decision was also perceived as a way for the government to reduce the high demand of places in nursery schools that are free for parents by “*jardins d’éveil*” that could be costly for them. Actually, mainly due to funding restrictions at the Ministry of Education, the percentage of children aged between two and three who attend a nursery school has dramatically decreased from 37 % in 2000 to only 15 % in 2009.

Moreover, a new decree was passed on January 2010 introducing significant reforms in the “*Code de la santé publique*” (Public health regulation). First, a decision was made to decrease from 50% to 40% the minimum share of the staff required to be skilled workers (*childminders, specialists in early-childhood education, childcare assistants, nurses and therapists*) in public childcare centres (*crèches or multi-purpose facilities*). This decision was the consequence of the fact that a shortage of skilled workers has acted as a brake on the swifter development of such centres. Secondly, citing the fact that many young children registered in childcare centres are not attending these centres every day or on a full time basis, the government decided to raise the number of children these centres would be authorized to accept. From 2010, *crèches* with more than 40 slots will be allowed to increase by 20% the number of children registered and attending the *crèche* (15% for *crèches* with less than 40 slots). Third, instead of being limited to having only three children under their care registered childminders are now allowed up to four. None of these decisions has passed without controversy and some trade-unions and associations have denounced them as threats to the quality of childcare. So far, the government has turned a deaf ear to such criticisms.

Tackling the issue of conflicting interests within the family

- More than ever, policy makers will be forced to cope with conflicting interests within the family: on one hand policy makers are entrusted to defend children’s well-being. But by taking this route they could be helping to penalize certain categories of mothers in occupational terms, not only the most poorly skilled but also women who are career-oriented. On the other hand the new services (extension of operating hours in childcare centres) being provided to women to enable them to adapt to the demands of employers draw a veil over the effects that current trends in organizational changes (development of atypical work schedules) are having on family life and children’s well-being, in particular their biological rhythms (Fagnani, 2010, Fagnani, Math, 2010). France is an appropriate illustration in this matter.

- The objective to fight unemployment while promoting gender equality on the labour market has been given greater priority on the policy agenda of many OECD countries. In France, successive governments and the advisory boards of family allowance funds have placed strong emphasis on the promotion of childcare opening hours that are more in tune with the needs of working parents. Additional investments have been made in the development of so-called ‘flexible’ child-care arrangements. Over the last decade, regular injections of public financing have led to the establishment of networks of both public and privately run childcare services operating late into the evening or, in some cases, 24 hours a day and seven days a week. The need for these extended services is a direct result of the increasing demands made on employees to work flexible or non-standard work schedules.

- Promotion of children's welfare, by ensuring that their biological rhythms are respected while allowing them to spend adequate time with their parents, must be reconciled with the need and desirability for policies providing women with the opportunities to adapt to the realities of the workplace, and their employers, so that they can keep their job or build a career. The clear conflict inherent in this arrangement means policy makers often draw a veil over the fact that the effects of the organizational changes in the workplace on family life and the children's well-being could prove to be at odds with the very principles on which family policy is (or should be) founded.

Dealing with the issue of the work/family life balance of middle-aged women (and men?)

- Labour force participation rates of men and women aged 55 to 64 still vary across countries but have increased everywhere since 1994 (Table 10 in Annex). In Germany for instance, employment rates (as salaried workers) of people aged 60 to 65 reaches 24.5 per cent in 2009 compared to 10.5 in 1999¹⁵. And it seems inevitable that participation rates in the 65 and over age-group will rise. As labour markets tighten, employers will no doubt find it advantageous to hire older workers and devise ways of retaining them. And as pressures on pensions increase and the elderly enjoy an extended period of "healthy ageing", more workers will be likely to seek employment beyond the official retirement age in order to support consumption over a longer lifespan.
- Therefore support and assistance provided by (mostly) women in their sixties may be heavily constrained in the near future. They will have to combine their own job with support and help provided to their adult children and at the same time they may have to take care of their own (dependent) parents and sometimes of their older partner. What about the impact of these family obligations on their own work/ life balance?

The rise in childless adults and childless couples over recent decades and the corresponding increase in the number of very old persons without offspring

- This rise is going to represent a huge challenge for policymakers in the years to come. Who will take care of them and to what extent? Who will fund the support services and health care they are going to need? Advances in evidence based medicine and geriatric care along with the development of new technologies providing in home help and support to the frail or unhealthy elderly could offer new opportunities for a growing share of these individuals to continue living at home. This phenomenon could however leave many of these people at the risk of social isolation.

The shortage of qualified workers in the childcare sector

- Along with the increase in mothers' labour force participation rates, the demand for high quality (and affordable) childcare provision will grow. There is already a shortage of qualified workers in the childcare sector (for instance in Germany and France). How will the policy-makers (and/or private service providers) address this issue? Will they be obliged to rely on (selective) immigration?

How to achieve a better gender equality at the workplace if family-friendly policies are continuing to be targeted at (implicitly or explicitly) mothers only?

- While most OECD countries in the EU have been particularly responsive to the need for an increase in female participation in the labour force they have not been immune from the phenomenon

¹⁵ Source: *Brermer Institut für Arbeitsmarktforschung und Jugendberufshilfe*, 2010.

of segregation along gender lines that persists across the entirety of OECD countries. Women and men are concentrated in different occupations, industries, and sectors (horizontal segregation). Furthermore, they are divided in terms of their position in the job hierarchy within the same occupation or profession (vertical segregation). This enduring gender inequality, both at home and in the workplace, means that this issue is likely to remain high on the policy agenda for the foreseeable future.

- As long as family commitments are viewed as a woman's prerogative both in organisational culture and in society as a whole, family-friendly measures and initiatives at the workplace are likely to be a poisoned chalice for women (Fagnani, Math, 2009).

For instance, parental leave schemes contribute 1) to maintain gendered patterns of working and caring and to establish asymmetrical professional trajectories within the couple 2) create incentives for employers to discriminate against women in hiring and make them reluctant to move women up the career ladder.

- State policies make it easier for women to adopt different working patterns, but without workplace cultural change they also increase the likelihood of mothers being disadvantaged in their careers. If men do not alter their working patterns flexible working is marginalised and gendered organisations survive unscathed (Lewis, Fagnani, 2010).

- Currently the European Parliament is pushing hard to extend the EU's minimum standards for maternity leave. The risk here is that increasing the disparity between maternity and paternity leave could have a negative effect on women's career prospects. It could reinforce employer's prejudices against women and contribute to the continuation of gender segregation along horizontal and vertical lines.

How to address the problem of shrinking working-age populations?

- Many women are still excluded from paid work and many do not make best use of their skills. Greater participation by women in the labour market – currently supported by most of the countries – will help offset the effect of an ageing, shrinking population and hence support economic growth¹⁶.

- Reforming tax and social-security systems that create disincentives for women to work would be necessary: for instance, in Germany and France (with the *quotient familial*¹⁷), which practice systems of joint taxation, preference is still given to families with a sole breadwinner whatever the level of household income though in Germany parents can choose between joint and individual taxation. This contrasts sharply with the policies in Nordic countries where taxes are assessed on an individual basis with the result that the partner earning least, usually the woman, is not penalised for this fact.

¹⁶ In its April 2006 article entitled "A Guide to Womenomics," the magazine *The Economist* decried the fact that "women remain the world's most under-utilized resource." "To make full use of their national pools of female talent," the article stated, "governments need to remove obstacles that make it hard for women to combine work with having children."

¹⁷ The *quotient familial* (family splitting) operates as follows: every household pays income tax on the basis of its total income divided by a number relating to its size (an "adult equivalent" for the household). A progressive rate is applied to this income per adult equivalent. For the same income level, a family with three children will pay less than a family with only one child.

- To tackle the issue of the shortage of qualified workers and at the same time to make the welfare system more sustainable, some governments are in favor of a selective immigration policy (for instance in Germany some policy makers advocate “*eine Arbeitsmarktkonforme Zuwanderung*”). Some countries already attempt to screen immigrants by skill level, so that they only get the more skilled ones.

The consequences for work/family life balance policies of the likely increase in precarious work arrangements

- A large number of empirical studies have shown that it is much harder to combine a job with family responsibilities (see supra, chapter 1) for low income families especially when they hold precarious jobs (often on a part-time basis) and cannot organize in advance childcare arrangements. In many countries, there is an increase in the number of these families. In the US for instance, the number of low-income working families rose by 350,000 between 2002 and 2006. More than one out of four working families with children was low-income in 2006, which represents a total of 9.6% of working families (Daguerre, 2010). Along this line Williams and Boushey (2010) mention that many employers have responded to globalization by turning what were once full-time jobs with benefits into part-time and temporary jobs without benefits in order to save labour costs. This results in the increase of the number of working-poor.
- It will be difficult (and likely impossible) therefore for policy-makers to give these working families the options and resources they need to be able to participate in the labour market and not to be obliged to live on welfare. Changes at the workplace are needed. A substantial and growing body of research provides evidence that the potential benefits for employers drawn from the implementation of family-friendly initiatives are numerous (Gornick, Hegewisch, 2010). Persistence of low-wage work, difficult working conditions and recent development of work schedules (see supra, chapter 2) are in fact important issues to address especially as far as employees located on the lowest steps of the social ladder are concerned;

Now after taking stock we look ahead.

2. The two scenarios: similar and irreversible characteristics

Despite striking differences between them, the two scenarios exhibit similar and irreversible characteristics:

- As a result of the rise in female employment rates over the last decades, only working patterns and employment conditions will differ according to the scenario.
- Given that the average level of education of the working-age population is likely to increase during the period from 2010 to 2030, the mismatch between the needs for, and the supply of, skills is likely to be reduced. Furthermore, the geographical mobility of the working population will spread in association with a higher average level of educational achievements.
- Higher residential mobility demands (which may complicate and reduce the possibility and the frequency of intergenerational familial contacts, and hence the role of grand parents in childcare).
- The need for immigrants (especially those employed in the caring sector): though the importance of immigration flows will vary, depending on the political context and economic needs.

- Changing gender roles and attitudes: family life's aspirations will be framed on ideas of partnership, equal sharing and respective negotiations. Only practices and behaviour will differ. Likewise the increase in the number of fathers who wish to be more involved in parenting: only the opportunities and options provided by institutions and employers to translate these aspirations into practice will vary.
- The increase in the number of couples living together apart.
- Fertility acts as a variable of adjustment and is dependent on the institutional and societal support provided to working parents.
- Prominent concern: ensuring social cohesion but room of manoeuvre will vary across the scenarios.

3. Fleshing out the two scenarios in regard to the work/family life balance

In each of the 2 scenarios, assumptions will be made on the capacity of public institutions and social partners to establish a framework for the negotiations, arbitrations and compromises that would help effectively tackle future challenges.

Issues related to the work/life balance that will be addressed within each of the 2 scenarios are:

- 1) Principles and rationales behind work/life balance policies. Explicit (and implicit) objectives guiding policy-makers.
- 2) The economic and social context and the gender equality issue: Implications for employed mothers and fathers and for gender equality at home (gender gap, discrimination, differences in employment rates, gender division of unpaid work, level of fathers' involvement in family life...).
- 3) Childcare provision and childcare arrangements (both formal and informal): the respective role played by the State, local authorities, employers, charitable and voluntary sector and the family network.
- 4) Parental leave schemes (at the company level and/or at the state level) and life-course savings schemes: time-off to care for children or a dependent relative, sick leave to care for a child, paid and unpaid leave, maternity and paternity leaves. Take-up rates among managerial and professional class and other social categories.
- 5) The role of immigrants working in the caring sector
- 6) Working patterns and employment conditions: how work impinges on non-working life?
Variations across the social ladder
- 7) The role of employers and businesses: to which extent do they take into account the family and caring obligations of their employees? Differences and similarities between small/medium-sized enterprises and large scale business and between the public and private sectors.
- 8) The impact of urban patterns and time/spatial constraints on the everyday life of working parents

9) Given the options and opportunities available to working parents to try to achieve their respective goals, how large is their room of manoeuvre? Strategies and actual practices towards paid work and unpaid work according to social class.

10) Fertility level and fertility behaviour

11) Policy approaches in work/family life balance that would be needed to address the problems, issues and challenges identified

After investigating what these trends and relationships mean for the future, I shall try to answer two questions: 1) in the light of my analytical findings, what are the main problems, issues and policy challenges that would likely arise in each of these future worlds? 2) What sort of policy approaches in work/family life balance would be needed to address the problems, issues and challenges identified?

Detailed description: how the future would unfold

Scenario A – “Golden Age?” – Gradual increase in economic stability and rapid adoption of Human centric technology

1) Principles and rationales behind work/life balance policies. Explicit (and implicit) objectives guiding policy-makers.

In a context favourable to the development and implementation of new ideas and innovations there is a trend towards a more holistic, cohesive and integrated approach to family support. Moreover, with the gradual return to more stable growth and the growing demand of (especially qualified) workers, the most explicit aim of the government is to help working parents to combine both paid work and unpaid work.

While overall public spending is curtailed, work/life balance policies are immune of any funding cutbacks though the aging population places high pressure on finances. Sound budget balance allows the government to maintain relatively generous work/life balance policies because the following objectives are high on the agenda 1) to promote women's employment both for economic and political reasons (the women's lobby is strong and put policy-makers under pressure) 2) to meet parents' needs in childcare arrangements 3) to enhance human capital and improve education for children because 'investing in children means investing in the future'.

This is possible because public spending on family-related cash benefits has been reduced, restructured and re-deployed: Child benefits have been scrapped for higher earners and middle class families, housing benefits have been reduced and other means-tested benefits are targeted at very low income families.

In accordance with the individualistic approach adopted by policy-makers, the presence of children plays no role in how income tax is calculated. Therefore the state saves money. Concomitantly to limit public expenditures in work/life balance policies, the state encourages employers to negotiate with their employees and to provide them with usable and family-friendly flexibility (see further).

2) The economic and social context and the gender equality issue: Implications for employed mothers and fathers and for gender equality at home (gender gap, discrimination, differences in employment rates, gender division of unpaid work, level of fathers' involvement in family life...).

The gender equality issue is high on the policy agenda: policy-makers and (large) companies (not in financial dire straits however) are prone to place the onus on this topic. The mainstreaming approach is the rule. The concept of gender equity that implies a fair or equitable distribution of opportunities and constraints among men and women is therefore put into practice in the domain of work/ life balance policies. Founding principles of public policies have progressively incorporated the acknowledgement that gender equality is a necessary component of a successful work/family policy.

Achievement levels in education for women have significantly increased thanks to the rapid development of new e-learning and training opportunities available at home: as a result changes in norms and values underlying gender attitudes and practices have evolved.

There is still a large divide between the better-off families and those located at the bottom of the social scale in terms of practices related to gender equality: clearly many men as well as most of the women have embraced notions of equality in paid and unpaid work. But only the most privileged or those who hold stable jobs can actually live out these ideals, partly because they can afford to outsource childcare, pay for home-help (cleaning, catering, etc...) and share more or less equally household chores.

Generally speaking the move towards the model of dual-earner/dual-carer model is still a rocky road. In the majority of the families there is an enduring asymmetry in family involvement between sexes.

Despite large income inequalities, the gender wage gap is narrowing (all other things being equal). There is an important share of women who have middle and high educational achievement levels. They outnumber the men in scientific and engineering academic departments. As a result, they are on a equal footing with men in advanced science and technology led sectors. Women take advantage of the high demand for workers, in particular the need for highly skilled labour force to improve their situation on the labour market

Low skilled women don't fare so well and their position on the labour market is in a predicament. However they are slowly closing the wage gap with their male counterparts.

As far as the tax system is concerned, individualisation of taxation has become the rule (the 'secondary earner' is no more penalised) and social rights are individualized. Indeed policy makers consider that the 'derived rights principle' works as a disincentive for women to be in paid employment (or encourages to take on an undeclared job).

3) Childcare provision and childcare arrangements (both formal and informal): the respective role played by the State, local authorities, employers, charitable and voluntary sector and the family network.

The government has placed the onus on formal childcare services both public and market-provided.

Norms and values underpinning childcare policies are diverse and flexible and in this area working parents can make the choices they deem best (registered childminders or childcare facilities, flexible opening hours, part-time or full-time, etc.).

A nanny at home remains out of reach for low-income families. Tax subsidies or tax breaks are not provided.

Fees in childcare centres are income-related. Registered childminders are directly employed by local authorities and fees are also income-related.

Undeclared work in the caring sector is limited except in low-income families that cannot afford to pay social contributions relative to a declared job and are often obliged to rely on undeclared childminders. Moreover most of the women and men in their sixties are employed and cannot look after their grand-children.

Thanks to a rapid adoption of family centric technology, dramatic changes took place in childcare arrangements: as far as better paid and middle-income dual-earner families are concerned, the adoption of human centric technology has been a key driver of change in childcare provision and early education. It is possible to supervise at the workplace the children aged over six left alone at home, communicate and help them in doing their home-work (likewise for nannies). E-learning and education from home have been enhanced. Young children enjoy a greater and secure autonomy. These new opportunities contribute to alleviate the tensions and conflicts linked to work/life balance of full-time earners.

Public childcare facilities are immune of any funding cutbacks but the increase in mothers' employment rates has resulted in a growing demand of places in publicly-owned or subsidised childcare services. There is a dramatic shortage of places. Therefore the government encourages employers to create their own childcare centres and provides them with symbolic rewards if they do so.

In a significant share of company-run childcare centres, opening hours are set to match the non-standard work schedules that have become increasingly common for blue and white-collar workers due to a rise in the amount of shift work.

Various childcare arrangements and related-costs mirror the wide social divisions:

There is a growth of private for profit self-funded nurseries: costs are high (though the parents can benefit from modest tax deductions) and only children born in upper-middle class and well-off families can attend these nurseries.

Access to people holding precarious jobs (the outsiders) to childcare allowances or public services is restricted as a result of their working conditions and unstable economic situation. They have to deal with whatever means are available when they work. The result is that their young children are often cared for by a rotating cast of characters and institutions within the same day. This is particularly true when both parents have non-standard work schedules or when the parent is living alone. This can be detrimental to the child's well being.

4) Parental leave schemes (at the company level and/or at the state level) and life-course savings schemes: time-off to care for children or a dependent relative, sick leave to care for a child, paid and unpaid leave, maternity and paternity leaves. Take-up rates among managerial and professional class and other social categories.

Maternity and paternity leaves are low paid (at a low replacement rate) and publicly subsidised. Employers are required to comply with the legislation (return to the job is guaranteed); Longer parental leaves or time-off to care for a sick child or a relative are possible options but are not paid (some employers may nevertheless provide paid leave to retain employees and reduce turn-over).

Parental leave schemes are designed to comply with the workfare approach.

In large companies, fathers are encouraged to share equally family responsibilities with their partner. As far as the gender division of unpaid work is concerned, family-related measures are strictly gender-neutral. Consequently parental leave schemes are designed to comply with this principle. For instance, many men are working in the caring sector and parental leaves can only be shared equally between fathers and mothers (the Iceland model). Schemes are also neutral towards same-sex couples.

5) The role of immigrants working in the caring sector

There is a selective immigration policy.

And there is a trend towards growing polarisation among the immigrants:

In the driving growth industries there is a significant share of the workforce who are immigrants with registration documents. They are well integrated. As a result of the shortage of places and of qualified staff in public and private childcare centres, a lot of immigrants work in the caring sector but most of them are not qualified and are poorly paid. To enhance quality in childcare provision, some training programmes (publicly funded) are available to them;

On the other hand many immigrants are working illegally (as childminders and nannies) and low paid: they look after children living in low-income families who cannot afford to pay declared care-workers.

6) Working patterns and employment conditions: how work impinges on non-working life? Variations across the social ladder

Work schedules are not strictly regulated (and even lax as far as the 'outsiders' are concerned) because policy-makers consider it is up to the employers and their employees to negotiate and make adequate arrangements. But working conditions are depending on the power relationships between employers and employees and trade unions play a minor role.

Consequently work may sometimes impinge on non-working life because employers are very demanding. But other options are possible and evolve over the life course. Room of manoeuvre is larger than before and less constrained choices can be made. Confidence in business is improving and workers don't fear to be made redundant or fired. In many companies workers have alternate work arrangements available.

But with the gradual return to more stable growth and a high demand for skilled workers, skilled women and men can afford to be more demanding towards their employer and are in a better position to claim flexible and family-friendly working arrangements. They are frequently obliged however to spend long hours at the workplace or work from home during the week ends and to make a lot of business travels. Boundaries between their job and their family life have been blurring.

As far as working conditions and their impact of work/life balance are concerned, clearly career-oriented and well paid women fare better than their less privileged counterparts and the divide between them has been growing: low qualified fathers and mothers are confronted with heavy professional constraints and have to cope with a lot of difficulties when both partners have precarious jobs.

7) The role of employers and businesses: to which extent do they take into account the family and caring obligations of their employees? Differences and similarities between small/medium-sized enterprises and large scale business and between the public and private sectors.

Thanks to a more favourable economic context, large companies and employers in the driving growth industries can afford to develop family-friendly initiatives. This policy contributes to boost their competitiveness as businesses need to recruit and retain qualified scientists, engineers, technicians as well as white-collar workers. It goes in tandem with a dramatic increase in the share of women on the boards of public limited or private companies,

Employers are prone to give priority to childcare provision over parental leave schemes: they often fund or subsidise their own childcare centres. Maternity and paternity leaves are paid (until a certain ceiling) but employers are reluctant towards long parental leaves. They prefer to promote flexible working arrangements and give up workers some control over the workday.

The growing phenomenon of tele-working is one response to improving work-life balance.

In high-tech sectors and highly competitive companies workers are provided with life course savings schemes that enable them to periodically adapt their professional obligations to their family commitments (short parental leave, part time work, days off...).

Workers benefit from flexibility and autonomy in doing their work especially in the more cutting-edge workplaces.

Due to high mobility demands of the labour market and frequent business travels, new challenges arise: employers frequently encounter difficulties in managing human resources. In dual-earner families where both partners are career-oriented, women are reluctant to sacrifice their own aspirations and as a result a significant number of couples are “living together apart”. This is likely to reduce the frequency of intergenerational familial contacts. This drawback may however be offset by very high-speed means of transport and possibility to work from home.

Most of the parents see themselves as crafting their own careers and enjoy a relative job security. Women and men can develop within their organisations, with (almost) equal rewards.

As far as these workplace policies are concerned, the divide between small/medium-sized companies and large companies and on the other hand between the public and private sectors is less pronounced than before. Differences in working conditions and family-friendly initiatives between the public and private sectors are blurring. Public servants can be made redundant.

8) The impact of urban patterns and time/spatial constraints on the everyday life of working parents

Commuting is on average less time-consuming than before (thanks to very high-speed means of transportation) and it makes it easier to manage everyday life. In the age of a widespread use of new technologies, distance does matter less than before for those located at the upper echelons of the professional scale. But virtual communication cannot fully replace face-to-face contacts.

As deprived urban areas contrast with gentrified areas, many manual workers or employed in the service sector – mostly low paid - still have to come to terms with time-consuming travel to work. Indeed time and spatial constraints have a strong impact on everyday life for those located at the lowest level of the social ladder because residential segregation has increased. Those living in the less privileged and poorly-equipped urban areas are employed in remote suburbs where companies employing low-skilled workers are located. They have long commuting times which is detrimental to their quality of life and reduces the time spent with the children.

9) Given the options and opportunities available to working parents to try to achieve their respective goals, how large is their room of manoeuvre? Strategies and actual practices towards paid work and unpaid work according to social class.

Many men as well as most of the women have embraced notions of equality in paid and unpaid work and for the most qualified it is easier than before to put into practice these ideals because employers and businesses are aware of their needs and have opened up new opportunities. Both partners however - whatever their income level - are under pressure and have to elaborate sophisticated strategies to be able to combine their (mostly) full-time job with their family commitments.

The 'ideal-worker' model persists at the workplace. Even middle-level and top managers and high potential talents often encounter difficulties in managing their everyday life and the course of their occupational career is linked to organizational aspects, informal norms related to management positions (such as time and mobility constraints) and social and cultural representations attached to leadership.

Those located at the lowest levels of the social scale don't fare well in these areas except if they hold stable and protected jobs. They often are in a predicament because they cannot rely on formal childcare arrangements as they alternate periods of unemployment, underemployment and part-time work ('bad transitions' instead of 'positive transitions'). Their professional and life trajectories are chaotic. Working-poor parents have to rely on grand-parents or informal and low-quality care to be able to work.

Across the social ladder, there are increasing numbers of couples where the woman earns more than her partner: it means that in many couples, the father is more involved in family life than her partner and room of manoeuvre in the management of the mother's everyday life is wider.

For parents with young children, opportunities to achieve their aspirations remain unevenly distributed.

10) Fertility level and fertility behaviour

Fertility level is relatively high (TFR at around 1.7/1.9) because a significant share of women can both have children and be in the workforce thanks to the support provided by both the State and the employers. Moreover employment prospects improve and most people feel confident about the future, as they perceive increasing social mobility.

But fertility rates vary across the social spectrum. Women with precarious jobs are more likely to restrict the number of their children and to postpone childbirth than better-off women holding stable jobs. Overall mean age at birth is on the rise due to medical innovations especially assisted reproductive therapy.

Large families are not frequent even in the upper or middle class due to 1) the increase in the number of 'couples living together apart', 2) because dual-earner and career-oriented couples are under pressure 3) as a result of the high tensions on the housing market and because middle-class families cannot afford to buy large apartments close to their workplace.

11) Policy approaches in work/family life balance that would be needed to address the problems, issues and challenges identified

Policy makers and employers will have to tackle the ‘dark sides’ identified and consider the unintended consequences of their policies.

- One of the most important issues they will have to address is related to social and income inequalities: if they aim at maintaining the social cohesion, they will have 1) to reinforce the vertical redistribution (through the tax system) even if it is at the expense of the horizontal redistribution 2) provide more and better services and benefits in kind to low-income families 3) invest in children and their education.

- In a context of persisting economic uncertainties (though business confidence improves) they will have to enhance the social integration of the most vulnerable (working-poor, immigrants, young people without any qualification) through transitional labour markets policies and secure their professional trajectories. Widespread individualisation and growing emphasis on making individuals ‘responsible’ create both risks and opportunities: while people are freed from some traditional constraints and theoretically have some capacity to shape their own life, traditional system of support in work, for example trade unions, has been eroded. Clearly it makes the most vulnerable on the labour market dependent on the power relationships between them and their employers. Therefore policy makers will have to reinforce and improve the employment legislation and introduce more regulation in regard to working conditions (in particular that working hours fit well with parents’ commitments outside work).

- Policies should further promote efficient gender equality programmes and at the same time encourage (and enable) fathers to get more involved in family life.

Scenario B – “Back to Basics” – Low economic stability and slow adoption of human centric technology

1) Principles and rationales behind work/life balance policies. Explicit (and implicit) objectives guiding policy-makers. The attitudes of employers and businesses towards family-friendly work/life initiatives

Reduction of public expenditures is a foremost priority because receipts are decreasing. Public policy regime also stresses individualism and put emphasis on the support families are expected to provide to dependent people. To facilitate the transition from unemployment to employment one of the objectives is to generate larger economic incentives to work, e.g. by lowering social benefits. Concomitantly existing supports to families have been greatly curtailed under an extended series of austerity measures. Family benefits and childcare allowances are targeted at low income families. Principle of universality has been abolished: all family-related allowances and housing benefits are means-tested and the ceiling under which families are entitled to is very low. In work/family life balance policies, retrenchment is underpinning reforms introduced.

Policy makers at the same time turn a blind eye on the difficulties the most economic vulnerable families (especially lone parent families) are dealing with in combining a job with care-giving responsibilities because they are not given the means and resources needed to be in employment.

City and state budgets are stuck in a downward spiral. These characteristics have negative consequences on public services provided to families, especially the most vulnerable: quality is down and access is restricted. The increasing prevalence of lone-parent families and of working-poor parents (holding precarious jobs) has substantial effects on trends in economic inequality across families.

Employers and businesses are very reluctant to promote work/life initiatives and flexible arrangements which are deemed to be too expensive. They draw a veil over long-term perspectives. Turn-over and absenteeism in these companies are high but they can easily hire new workers.

Labour markets are tough. New entrants (especially women, youth and immigrants) and the less skilled are frequently relegated to temporary jobs or unemployment.

2) Work/life balance policies and the gender equality issue: gender-neutral or “woman-friendly”? Implications for employed mothers and fathers and for gender equality at home

Despite the government has theoretically put emphasis on the gender equality issue (paying lip service to the women’s lobby), family-related initiatives and measures remain imbued by ‘maternalist’ values: work/life balance policies are not actually designed to be gender-neutral. Measures are implicitly targeted at women.

Clearly many men as well as most women have embraced notions of equality in paid and unpaid work but the majority lacks the options to actually live out these ideals.

In a context of slow adoption of family-centric technology, gender division of unpaid work remains rather traditional. This has detrimental implications for women’s professional prospects. As far as women in management are concerned, progress has stalled. Only in high income dual-earner families who outsource care and pay for home help, both partners can put into practice the principle of equality.

In times of economic uncertainties men are more likely to believe that their own jobs and careers have to come first. Couples are falling back on a neo-traditional model that gives women the option to work but still expects the mother to be the foremost caretaker. A clash between shared aspirations and conflicting fallback positions emerges. This has a strong impact on fertility behaviour (see infra).

3) Childcare provision: the respective role played by the State, local authorities, employers, charitable and voluntary sector and the family network. Formal versus informal childcare arrangements.

Government has made outright cuts in public sector spending and formal childcare provisions are not immune from funding cutbacks. Subsidies are available only for low-income families and are scarce and sporadic even for them. As pressure on public finances is high, centre-based care are poorly subsidised. Child-care costs are therefore a barrier to employment and often result in curtailed work hours, particularly for low-income mothers. This means that those mothers are trapped in a vicious circle of poverty.

Quality is down and there is a dramatic shortfall of places in publicly-subsidised centres. Informal childcare arrangements are widespread among low-income and working-poor families. Mostly unemployed, grandparents are the common providers of non-parental care to infants.

The for-profit childcare sector is booming.

Devaluation of paid care work still persists. It contributes to the shortage of qualified workers in this sector.

In a context of slow adoption of family centric technology, parents strive to organize at the local level alternative childcare arrangements based on reciprocity and solidarity between them. The extent to which people engage in voluntary or charitable work aimed at helping working parents (especially low-paid single parents) to cope with their care-giving responsibilities is large.

4) Parental leave schemes and policies: time-off to care for children or a dependent relative, sick leave to care for a child, paid and unpaid leave, maternity and paternity leaves.

Programmes in this domain are poor and considered too costly both by the state and by the employers. Parental leaves (except maternity leave) are not paid. As a result low income or lower-middle class families cannot afford to take up this leave.

Paternity leave does not exist.

Women are entitled to 12 weeks of paid maternity leave, but only up to a low cap.

5) The role of immigrants working in the caring sector

While there is a very selective immigration policy, markets emerge with a low-wage labour force, high degree of income inequality, and a large (often illegal) immigrant population that serve as household and day care centre workers. It is however difficult for families to hire immigrants because most of them live far away in outlying suburbs (an outcome of the strong residential segregation) and have no means of transportation whatsoever to commute.

Immigrants experience wage discrimination as well as great insecurity from the informal, unregulated economy. Most of them are in an economic and social plight. The issue of their social and economic integration is really at stake.

6) Working patterns and employment conditions: how work impinges on non-working life?

Against the background of high unemployment, employers can afford to be very demanding and ask for overtime that is not always paid. Regulation on work schedules is lax.

While employees without any formal instruction are well below the minimum wage, many of them are multiple job-holders: it is the only means of overcoming financial difficulties. Part-time employment (where women are over-represented) is generally associated with precarious work rather than with a deliberate choice to work fewer hours.

Working from home is not widespread. Only professionals, executives and managers are given these alternative work options.

All these working patterns and employment conditions make it hard to combine a job with family commitments, especially for the most vulnerable families. They deter or even prevent mothers from seeking employment. This trend is reinforced by the fact that quality of work has deteriorated. Difficult working conditions have a strong impact on fertility behaviour (see infra).

7) The role of employers and businesses: to which extent do they take into account the family and caring obligations of their employees? Differences and similarities between small/medium-sized companies and large companies and between the public and private sectors

Work/life balance policies have been relegated to the back stage of the policy arena. It is up to the employers to introduce family-friendly initiatives. Flexible working arrangements, for instance, such as job-sharing, are at the discretion of employers and are more frequently available to higher-earning employees and those working in the public sector.

No progress whatsoever has been made towards recognising that workers may also be caregivers. Given the social and economic pressures acting on employed people, they have to come to terms with employer-driven flexibility and only those with the qualifications needed on the labour market can resist and reject these demands.

Therefore turn-over and absenteeism are high. Small businesses find it particularly tricky to juggle absences.

8) The impact of urban patterns and time/spatial constraints on the everyday life of working parents

Extensive suburbanization has led to long commuting hours and residential segregation is stronger than ever. Urban areas are highly specialised which means that commuting is time-consuming for many workers. This impinges on family time. It also results in the separation of a growing number of young families from extended family networks: it makes it more difficult to rely on them and ask for help in everyday life.

In the absence of efficient housing policies, many low-income and lower-middle income families are 'trapped' in deprived and badly equipped remote areas: they are not able to alleviate time and spatial constraints. This is all the more true that no significant progress in transportation technology has been made.

Co-residence rates of young people (and even of their partner) with their parents are high because they cannot afford to buy or rent an apartment. It interacts and goes in tandem with difficulties in finding a stable job. It has an impact on fertility behaviour (see infra).

9) Given the options and opportunities available to working parents to try to achieve their respective goals, how large is their room of manoeuvre? Strategies and actual practices towards paid work and unpaid work according to social class.

Slow career progression and low salaries reduce room of manoeuvre for most of the working parents. The mismatch between work and family life is strong especially for those parents located at the lowest levels of the social scale. The share of women in psychological distress is large and associated with high absenteeism at the workplace. Well being of children is put at risk in working-poor families. Quality of life varies widely across the social spectrum.

Achieving a successful career is a rocky road even for highly qualified women with dependent children. Long-term strategies are difficult to elaborate.

Where they can, employed parents are obliged to rely on extended family members to get by. Employment rates of grand parents are low. They can therefore provide support to their children and grand-children when they live nearby.

Rising unemployment has hit working-class men most severely; therefore, significant proportions of households depend on women's earnings.

Against this background, many families are striving to move away from the 'Scylla of materialism' and the 'Charybdis of selfish individualism': solidarity, reciprocity and intensification of social networking are being enhanced especially as far as childcare arrangements are concerned. Even in this gloomy context, glimmers of hope are emerging: creative and innovative practices flourish at the local level. Immigrants and natives who live in the same neighborhood are also able to forge meaningful social ties.

10) Fertility level and fertility behaviour

Fertility level is low (less than 1.5). Couples are reluctant to have more than one child and postpone regularly the birth of a higher rank child. Timing of births differs across social class. Mean age at first birth remains stable in the highest-income families and has been rising in lower middle-class. Share of childless women is significant especially among career-oriented women.

Large families are only frequent among well-off families.

11) Policy approaches in work/family life balance that would be needed to address the problems, issues and challenges identified

- To minimise social inequalities and enhance social cohesion: vertical redistribution should have priority over horizontal redistribution. Emphasis should be put on the enhancement of public services provided to families and on the development of high-quality childcare centres (with related-income fees).
- At the same time, work/life balance policies need to be integrated and well structured.
- In response to pressure to assist families with meeting their childcare requirements and taking into account that social inequalities are pronounced: identifying the best political and social arrangements which enhance social welfare in order to break the cycle of poverty would be necessary.
- Life-long learning and training programmes should be accessible to anyone but in priority to low income and young parents.

4. Future-proof work/family life balance policies: those that will persist versus those that will not be likely sustainable

Those that will not be likely sustainable:

- *Joint taxation*: the French taxation system practises joint taxation and still favours families with a sole breadwinner. Married couples are not offered the choice between joint or individual assessment, which is the case in Germany. Individualisation of taxation will be the rule: the “secondary earner” is no more penalised.
- *The “familialisation” approach*: the “derived rights principle” for instance is a disincentive to be in paid employment (and encourages to take on an undeclared job) and to be dependent on the partner’s income earnings. Social rights will be individualized.
- Work/life balance policies are pursued separately from issues concerning equal pay and equal treatment policies.
- Parental leave policies implicitly targeted at mothers (indirect discrimination).

Future-proof work/family life balance policies that make impossible to turn back the clock to an earlier period: those that will persist

- Gender Mainstreaming strategy

- An integrative and holistic approach
- Gender-neutral principle
- Development of childcare policies will inevitably persist: funding structures, childcare arrangements, respective roles of the State, local authorities and the market, quality will however vary.

IV. EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES

1) An important quality indicator in ECEC provision is the training level of staff. Good staff training can foster high-quality social care provision: the example of “Registered Childminders in France” (Fagnani, Letablier, 2009).

2) Germany: “Local Alliances for family” and the “Career and Family Audit”.

“Local Alliances for Family”: establishing networks at the local level

The launching of the new initiative ‘*Alliance for the Family*’ in 2003 is an example of the new policy orientation, bringing together a broad range of measures and activities intended to enhance the work/life balance. The project – initiated by the BmFSFJ in cooperation with the Bertelsmann Foundation – aims to coordinate the activities of different actors, such as employers’ associations and trade unions, local governments, companies, etc. The main goal, as laid down in a consensus paper, is the development of a ‘sustainable family policy’ based on the three (normative) assumptions that: one, German society needed a higher fertility rate; two, the economy needed qualified workers and a higher labour market participation of women; and three, children needed (better) education and guidance in their early years.

Activities include the regular exchange of experiences between actors at different levels. Representatives of the institutions and associations involved built a ‘competence group for balance’ to work towards a consensus between vested interest groups. A scientific committee is responsible for the supervision of the process.

One project under the remit of the Alliance for the Family, by which the new approach can be illustrated, is the initiative ‘*Local Alliances for Family*’. Following the assumption that the local context is essential for families’ living conditions and well-being, the initiative ‘Local Alliances for Family’ was launched by the BMFSFJ in 2003. The aim was to initiate local round tables, or alliances, of the relevant local actors capable of helping to improve the context for family life in the municipalities. Such networks could include the local administration, the town council, companies, representatives of employers’ associations and trade unions, churches, third sector initiatives, families and other actors. The number of Local Alliances for Family rapidly increased and reached 364 in January 2007 (Klammer, Letablier, 2007).

The Ministry has installed a service office to support municipalities running a “Local Alliance for Family”. The focus is on different aspects of family life and work/life balance, according to the needs and resources identified in their local contexts. The topics treated cover a wide range which includes the organization of public care for children and the elderly; scheduling of flexible working time arrangements; creating family-friendly opening hours for the administration; and modifying timetables for public transport. A wide array of services and help is offered, with a focus on counselling and workshops on the spot.

The services offered are in line with the principle of *subsidiarity*, the idea being to assist engaged partners to elaborate their own, locally strategies. Another aim of the service office is to bring different local alliances together for an exchange of ideas and experiences. The whole project is scientifically supervised and assessed by a research institute, the German Institute for Youth (DJI).

The “Career & Family Audit”

The "Career & Family Audit" was introduced to give companies of the private sector as well as public establishments incentives and ideas to develop family-friendly strategies in accordance with the particular situation and goals of the company. Run by the Hertie-Foundation, the programme is supported and promoted by the family ministry under the roof of the “Alliance for the family”.¹⁸ Companies that apply for this audit get support to develop firm-specific strategies. Within the auditing process the already existing family-friendly measures are scrutinized and the firm-specific potential to develop additional family friendly activities is analysed. Since there is no legal obligation for companies to realise family-friendly policies, the audit is based on the voluntary engagement of companies.

More than 140 single family-friendly measures belong to the portfolio checked within the auditing process (Schmidt/Mohn 2004). One main focus is on working time arrangements that can help to improve the reconciliation of work with family. Other measures encompass monetary benefits on the company-level, company childcare facilities, measures concerning the location of work or the work organisation etc. Until November 2006, 372 German enterprises had successfully undergone the auditing process and received the certificate.¹⁹ The government (represented by the family ministry and the ministry of economics) underlines its support for the audit by hosting the annual certification ceremony.

The family ministry also supports the development towards more family-friendliness in collective agreements and on the company level by providing information and tools that can help the actors of both sides to implement family friendly measures and to improve reconciliation.

Multi generational Centres: an Action Programme of the Federal Government

The programme's overall goal is to build a new mix of public services, involving non-profit organizations, the private sector and volunteers (the motto is “*Starke Leistung für jedes Alter*”)²⁰.

Besides providing old and young people with opportunities to connect to each other (meals are provided, as are meeting rooms and childcare services) and to enhance intergenerational solidarity, the programme also serves to reinforce relationships and connections. Employed people are able to mix with people outside formal employment; professionals rub shoulders with volunteers; and otherwise fragmented service providers in the community have a convenient point of reference.

¹⁸ Two other certifications that have been developed to promote and reward family-friendliness on the company-level are “Erfolgsfaktor Familie” (success factor family, see www.erfolgsfaktor-familie.de) and “Total E-Quality” (see www.total-e-quality.de).

¹⁹ www.beruf-und-familie.de, 10/1/07

²⁰ For more information: Annemarie Gerzer Sass, Serviceagentur Mehrgenerationenhaeuser
Annemarie-gerzer@mehrgenerationenhaeuser.de

3) Companies across Europe implementing innovative employment policies, practices and agreements and contribute to the Lisbon strategy objectives.

4) The U.S. Department of Labor dramatically expanded Family and Medical Leave Act rights for members of same-sex and other “nontraditional” families (June 22, 2010).

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Table 8 - Distribution of working hours among women in couple families by number of children aged 0-14 years, 2007

	Women with one child				Women w/two or more children			
	1-29	30-39	40-44	45+	1-29	30-39	40-44	45+
Austria	43.7	27.2	22.9	6.2	60.4	18.6	14.9	6.2
Belgium	26.3	52.3	12.5	9.0	38.8	42.5	9.6	9.1
Bulgaria	1.1	2.2	80.9	15.8	1.5	1.7	80.2	16.7
Cyprus ^{1,2}	7.4	51.2	31.9	9.5	10.5	59.0	24.2	6.4
Czech Republic	8.6	18.1	66.7	6.6	7.7	17.8	67.4	7.1
Estonia	8.1	10.3	80.1	1.5	11.1	6.5	77.5	4.9
Finland	9.1	70.8	14.8	5.3	9.6	66.7	17.6	6.1
France	19.5	58.8	11.8	10.0	26.9	50.7	11.3	11.1
Germany	50.7	27.4	18.7	3.3	68.3	17.1	12.0	2.6
Greece	13.6	20.9	46.0	19.5	16.7	22.7	42.3	18.3
Hungary	6.5	5.2	83.2	5.2	7.8	5.9	82.0	4.3
Italy	33.7	27.4	31.1	7.9	41.9	30.4	20.4	7.4
Latvia	4.7	4.9	81.5	8.9	8.6	4.9	71.4	15.0
Lithuania	9.2	12.1	73.1	5.6	13.6	11.7	70.5	4.2
Luxembourg	34.1	14.9	49.5	1.5	48.7	17.8	31.6	1.9
Malta	32.2	25.3	39.4	3.1	34.0	29.8	32.9	3.3
Netherlands	69.1	24.3	5.7	1.0	81.0	14.8	3.2	1.1
Poland	14.5	7.3	64.5	13.7	15.2	8.0	60.4	16.4
Portugal	6.0	23.5	62.5	8.0	9.0	28.4	53.0	9.6
Romania	4.8	6.1	76.6	12.6	10.0	10.6	65.8	13.7
Slovak Republic	2.0	18.2	73.3	6.6	3.5	22.4	68.8	5.3
Slovenia	3.0	1.7	88.3	7.0	4.3	2.1	82.7	10.9
Spain	25.3	28.2	37.8	8.6	25.8	32.9	31.4	10.0
Turkey	11.5	10.5	36.9	41.2	24.4	11.2	28.2	36.3
U.K.	44.8	32.9	12.0	10.3	60.8	23.9	8.1	7.3

Source: taken from OECD Family database 2010

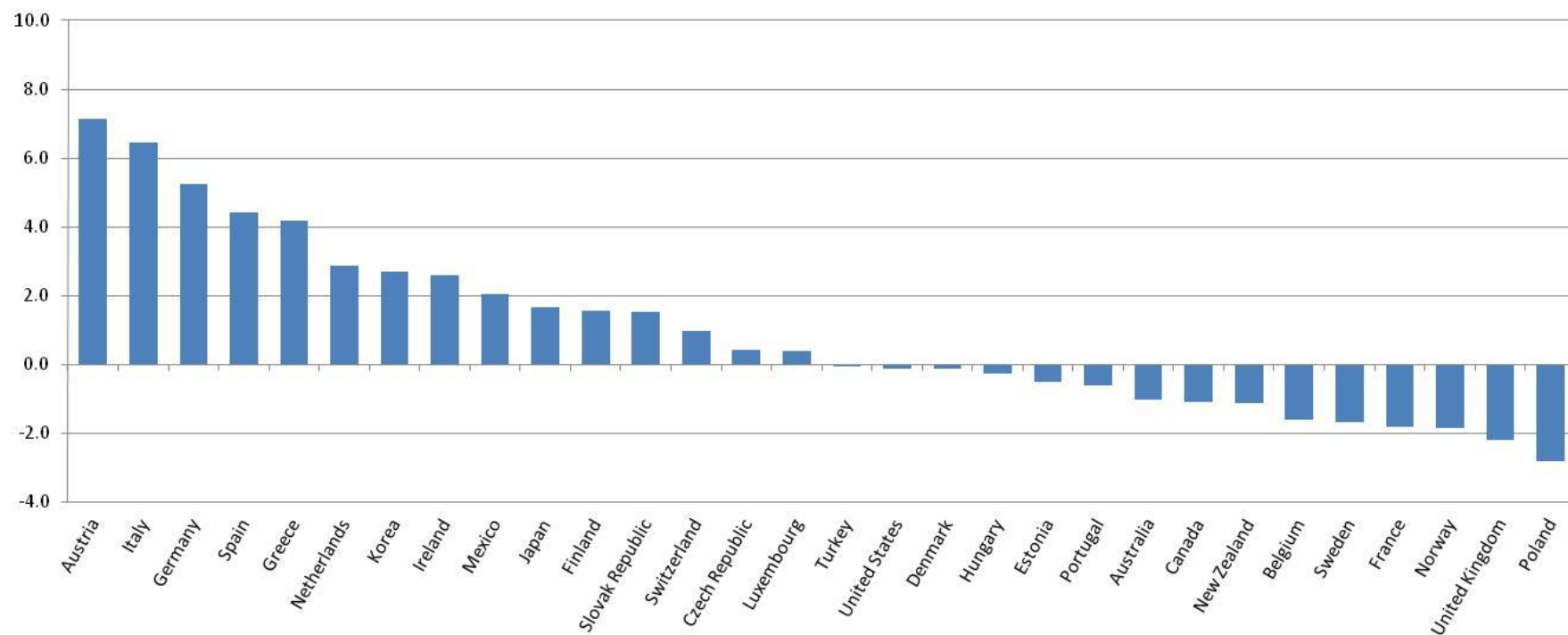
Table 9 - Trends in Employment patterns for couple parent families with a child under 6

	1984					2007				
	Both parents full-time	Man full-time, woman not working	Man full-time, woman part-time	Neither parent employed	Other	Both parents full-time	Man full-time, woman not working	Man full-time, woman part-time	Neither parent employed	Other
Austria ^a	-	-	-	-	-	19.0	32.6	37.7	3.7	7.0
Belgium	37.0	43.4	10.9	5.8	2.9	35.0	21.2	30.5	5.7	7.6
France	35.9	44.2	11.9	4.1	3.9	38.4	29.6	21.8	0.1	10.2
Germany	-	-	-	-	-	19.0	31.8	34.7	0.1	14.4
Greece	26.3	61	4.5	5.4	2.8	45.8	44.3	5.7	1.6	2.6
Italy	33.3	57.9	3.7	2.6	2.5	31.6	41.6	19.1	3.8	3.9
Luxembourg	24.2	64.5	8.4	1.8	1.1	30.9	32.3	31.0	1.1	4.7
Netherlands ^b	3.0	67.4	15.1	8.2	6.3	5.4	19.2	58.6	3.1	13.7
Poland	-	-	-	-	-	47.5	35.5	5.8	4.7	6.4
Portugal ^c	-	-	-	-	-	66.5	21.1	4.6	2.8	5.0
Spain ^d	-	-	-	-	-	36.5	39.0	16.4	2.8	5.2
U.K	7.3	54.8	22.5	13.1	2.3	20.2	29.4	37.1	6.2	7.1
U.S.	26.3	44.3	15.6	5.4	8.4					

Notes: - Data not available, a) 1995 instead of 1994, b) 1985 instead of 1984, c) 1986 instead of 1984, d) 1987 instead of 1984

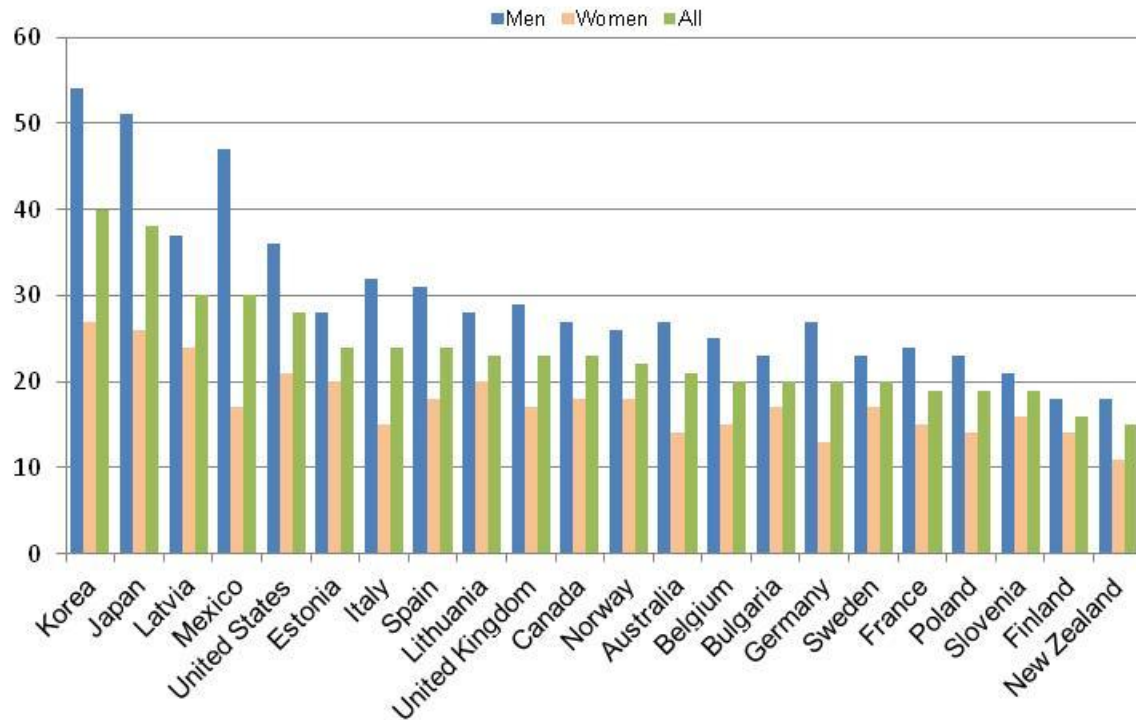
Sources: Employment Outlook 2001; Secretariat calculations on basis of the ELFS 2007 and national sources.

Figure 10 - Change in the percentage share of women's part-time employment rates, 2000 to 2007



Source: OECD Database on Labour Force Statistics and ELFS for EU-countries outside the OECD

Figure 11 - Average time spent travelling to and from work



1) Countries are ranked by decreasing time spent by all respondents. Year: 1999: France; 2000: Estonia, Finland, Hungary; 2001: Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom; 2002: Germany, Mexico; 2003: Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Spain; 2004: Korea; Poland; 2005: Canada; 2006: Australia, Belgium, Japan, New Zealand, Turkey, United States

Source: For European countries, National Time Use Surveys as reported in the Harmonised European Time use Surveys dataset (HETUS); Australia: 2006 Time Use Survey (ABS); Canada: 2005 General Social Survey; Japan: 2006 Survey on Time-use and Leisure activities; Korea: 2004 Time-use Survey; Mexico: 2002 National Survey on Time-use (see LMF2.5 for details).

Table 10 - Labour force participation rates (55 to 64 age group): evolution 1994-2008

WOMEN

	1994	2008
Australia	27.7	50.1
Austria	18.4	31.6
Canada	36.9	54.6
Finland	38.9	59.0
France	30.1	37.7
Germany	28.3	50.6
Italy	140.2	24.7
Japan	48.1	53.1
Korea	49.5	47.9
Netherlands	18.5	42.5
New Zealand	36.7	64.3
Norway	55.4	64.9
Switzerland	47.2	61.6
UK	40.7	50.0
USA	48.9	59.1

Source: OECD Employment Outlook, 2009

Table 11 - Percentage of children aged under 3 attending childcare facilities or being cared for by child minders* in Germany: evolution 1994-2009

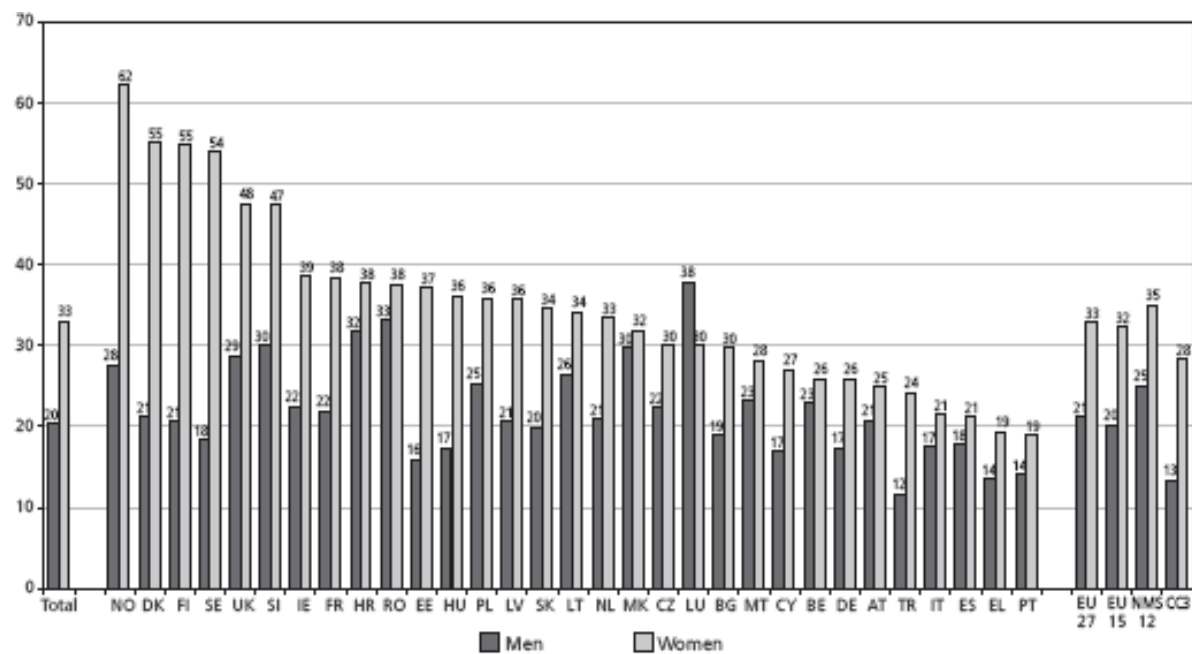
	December 1994	March 2007	March 2009
Germany	6,3	15.5	20.4
Old Länder	2,2	8.1**	-
New Länder	41,3	37.4**	-

Source : Destatis, 2008 and Statistisches Bundesamt: Statistisches Jahrbuch 2007 and Statistisches Bundesamt (2009). http://www.bpb.de/wissen/32UOZK,0,Familie_und_Kinder.html

*'öffentlich geförderter Kindertagespflege'

** Without Berlin

Figure 12 – Public sector employment, by gender and country (%)



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